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THE MEMOIRS OF
Queen Hortense

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JOSEPHINE
Portrait by Appiani from the
Collection of Prince Napoleon

THE MEMOIRS OF
Queen Hortense

Published by arrangement with Prince Napoleon

Edited by Jean Hanoteau

Translated by
Arthur K. Griggs

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The Memoirs of
Queen Hortense

CHAPTER X

THE QUEEN HORTENSE: IN THE DAYS OF MARIE-LOUISE: THE KING OF ROME (1810-1812)

A Visit to Switzerland—Aix-en-Savoie—The Duchesse de Montebello—Pauline—The Fate of Louis—The Queen's Household—Monsieur de Flahaut Again—At the Emperor's Court—The Duc de Rovigo—The Birth and Baptism of the King of Rome—Caroline—Two Balls in February, 1812—A Man Who Loved a Queen.

MY mother was at the springs of Aix-les-Bains and urged me to join her there. She did not conceal her satisfaction at seeing me at last entirely free and independent, thanks to my husband's departure. My physician, who was extremely worried about my lungs, forbade my going to Plombières and thought that only sulphur springs could stop the progress of a disease which recent events had aggravated.

Switzerland was a country I was anxious to become acquainted with. From all the descriptions of it I had heard I imagined it must be a peaceful spot where one could be quiet and happy. The simple life of the inhabitants, the grandeur and impressive beauties of the landscape, the limited horizon which seemed to place a barrier between us and the evils of the outer world, all caused me to feel that here was a place where one could find that ideal felicity I had long ago abandoned all hope of ever encountering. Aix-en-Savoie lay so close to the frontier of this beautiful country that I could not resist the temptation to enter it.

I sent all my traveling carriages along the French road that leads through Geneva.[1] I and half my household in absolute incognito—for fear of incurring the anger of the Emperor, who would not have granted me permission to leave French soil—followed the highway that leads to Besançon, Pontarlier and Lausanne. I was so weak that two servants were obliged to carry me in a little specially constructed chair whenever the road became too tiring.

In one of these excursions I noticed a sort of hut which I thought was uninhabited. It was placed between two trees and exposed to the wind and rain. Nevertheless I entered. An old man was sitting there on a wooden chair, all alone; his legs were covered with straw and he appeared completely destitute. He told me he was nearly a hundred years old, that he had taken part in the Battle of Fontenoy and lived there on such alms as the travelers happened to bestow. My first impulse was to put an end at once to his misery. I was on the point of giving him a considerable sum of money when I suddenly stopped. Entire relief coming unexpectedly might prove too great a shock. Therefore I sent for wine to be brought from my carriage. As I fed it to him myself, spoonful by spoonful, I added to the heap of napoleons which I placed in his hand. Finally his joy became so keen that he was seized with a terrible fit of palsy, and I burst into tears, fearing that my charity would result in the death of this unhappy being.

I can still recall the details of this touching scene. My servants and my postilions, out of curiosity, had deserted the carriages. Like me each of them felt a hitherto unknown emotion. Usually it is misfortune that arouses one's sympathy. In this case it was joy that proved terrifying. I was still standing beside this poor old man when we saw his wife, who was seventy years old, appear with some fruit which she had secured for him. She seemed, at first, to be better able to bear the sudden change in their fortunes than her husband. But the poor mother

at the sight of the miracle that had taken place imagined anything was possible and even thought I could work as many more as I pleased. She told me about her son, from whom she had had no news since he had taken part in the siege of Toulon twenty years before, and implored me to tell her what had become of him. I could only promise to make inquiries. This promise was enough to soothe her maternal anxiety. After she had asked me many questions I withdrew, satisfied at having discovered that a single unfulfilled desire is enough to dampen too intense a joy. Thus grief returns to sadden us even in the midst of our happiness. It seems as though our soul must always retain insatiable longing, which nothing can appease. Perfect content can never be attained, utter grief is all we are capable of experiencing. The former is always above us, just beyond our grasp; the latter never leaves our side.

I arrived at Geneva, having already benefited somewhat from the pure mountain air and the beauties of the scenery. My lodgings were outside the town at the little village of Le Sècheron. I was still very weak and weary. In vain I tried to rest in my rooms and finally I joined my ladies in waiting in the garden of Monsieur Heutsch, which was next to the inn. They were talking with several unknown gentlemen who, seeing they were strangers, were describing the surrounding country to them. When I appeared the general attention turned to me. One of the gentlemen, a kind and obliging man, looked at me attentively. Seeing how ill I was, he at once began to speak of the beneficial effects of the Swiss climate. He assured me it would do me good. He owed his own life partly to the excellence of the climate, partly to the care of one of his friends, a skilful physician whom he pointed out to me, strolling about a short distance off. Thereupon, without waiting for me to reply the stranger hurried off and returned with the doctor. The latter stepped up to me and said, with a penetrating glance,

"How long have you been ill? Just what is the trouble?" I thought he was asking, "What are the sorrows which are shortening your days?" For it was my sorrows which lay at the root of my illness, and to speak of the latter was to remind me of the former. The only answer I could make was to burst into tears. The sympathetic interest of the stranger who had brought the doctor to me increased at the sight of my distress. Deeply moved he took my arm, offered to look after me, urged me to seek amusement, pointed out the beauties of the lake. Seeing Monsieur Heutsch standing in the doorway of his home he introduced me without asking my permission as a foreign visitor and made me go into the house, where that day there happened to be a fairly numerous gathering. I made no effort to resist. I was too deeply moved to be able to speak. The doctor kept watching me in order to discover what was the cause of my illness. My ladies followed us silently, not venturing to reveal my incognito. In order to conceal my too clearly visible emotion as I entered the drawing-room I bowed and, walking over to the piano, picked up a piece of music.

"It is a new romance," said my host. "It was written by the Queen of Holland. My niece sings it very well." She proceeded to do so, and the self-assurance of the performer made me quite sure that she had no idea the author was beside her. I was about to withdraw and return to the inn when we heard sounds of music on the lake. I was obliged to yield once more to the insistence of my host and the gentleman who had introduced me and go to meet the new arrivals. I cannot say whether it was because of my embarrassment, my fatigue or the effect of the music on my nerves, but my tears continued to flow abundantly. The more ashamed I was to weep, the less I was able to stop. The new arrivals, who had come from Geneva, left their boat, and one of them having doubtless recognized me, people began to whisper to one another. Finally my name reached the ears of the gentleman who

had remained with me and who, so anxious was he to make himself agreeable, had offered me a dinner in the country for the next day, to be followed by a boating party and all the other pleasures one may enjoy in the suburbs of Geneva. Immediately he let go my arm. His embarrassed manner, his evident fear of having displeased me showed me that my incognito had been broken. But without giving the party time to make sure that it was really I whom they had been entertaining I took advantage of a moment's liberty and hurried back to the inn, letting the others go on to Geneva.

That evening I felt so ill that I was obliged to send for the same doctor who a few hours before had been asked to diagnose my case. I did not need to enter into any explanations as in order to have the gates of the town opened to allow the doctor to come to where I was I had been obliged to give my name. The next morning, feeling a little better and wishing to make up for my abrupt departure on the preceding day and to return all the politeness that had been shown me although my identity had been unknown, I sent word to my neighbor that I was postponing my departure so as to take advantage of his kind offer of a luncheon party for me and my ladies. At luncheon people were tactful enough to appear not to have recognized me. But in addition to their previous attentions they added a respectful manner which made it perfectly clear that they knew who I was. I explained my tears as well as I could. The ballad was sung over again at my request but this time with a distinct shyness. At noon I left to meet my mother.

I had just passed the first posting-house when, some distance off, I caught sight of two horsemen dashing toward me at full speed. When our minds are full of some particular person we fancy that we see him everywhere, and if we do happen to meet him we believe our intuition has been correct. That was why at the sight of one of the approaching horsemen I exclaimed, "I was

right, it is he." My heart beat violently, but I hid my emotion and displayed only surprise when Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Pourtalès, my mother's equerry, appeared beside my carriage. The former was staying at Aix, taking the waters there on account of his health, the latter accompanied my mother. She had sent them ahead to meet me and was waiting for me a little farther on. A few moments later I was in her arms. How marvelous it is to exchange agitation for calm, loneliness for tender affection!

But to bear either grief or happiness one must have strength, and mine was exhausted. If a storm came up my nerves were on edge; I conjured up a thousand imaginary phantoms. The sight of Monsieur de Flahaut, who spent his days with us, provoked an emotion which became steadily more and more difficult to conceal. It was more than my feeble health could bear. For the first time since I knew that I loved him, I now saw him constantly. If he devoted himself to me I felt extremely embarrassed; if he was gay and attentive with the young ladies who were with us, an indescribable feeling of bitterness and shame filled my heart. I wished to conquer all my emotion. All I could do was to retire to my room to weep, blaming my weakness and blushing to find in my soul instead of a calm friendship all the torments of love.

My eyes constantly swam with tears in spite of my mother's tender solicitude and that of those about her. Everything revolved about me. The first thing everyone inquired about was my health, the most important thing in the world was to find something that amused me, to keep something from me that might upset me. At last I came to consider that my life must be worth something because so many other people seemed to think it precious. What more did I need to make me happy? I have always remembered this quiet month as the happiest time I ever knew. But how could I enjoy it in the midst of those inner

conflicts, which were more than my feeble health could bear and which absorbed all my energy?

The account of the danger which my mother had been in on the Lac du Bourget the day before I arrived made me tremble. She had left Aix to visit the Abbey of Hautecombe. The weather had been fine when she left, but on her return a storm had come up while she was in the middle of the lake. The wreaths and extra canvas hangings with which the vessel had been adorned in her honor added to her danger, as they offered more resistance to the wind. It seemed certain that the boat would sink. Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Pourtalès had already made their preparations for rescuing her in case the ship went down. All the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, aware of the Empress's danger, had gathered on the shores and awaited some opportunity to come to her aid. By the exercise of great courage and skill the crew managed to weather the storm. The vessel arrived safely in port, and a kind Providence spared me the horrible misfortune which had threatened me.

Monsieur de Flahaut's very brief leave of absence expired. He returned to Paris. My mother made a little trip into Switzerland while I remained alone at Aix. The waters were so excellent for my chest and so good for my general health that had it not been for my children I should have still further prolonged my stay.

The Emperor wrote me to come back to Paris to be with my children. My mother, whom I visited[2] at Geneva, was sorry to see me leave. She feared the Emperor, as he never wrote her, wished to have her stay out of France. She had bought the estate called Prégny, on the edge of the lake. But although it was very attractive nothing could take the place of her own country and her beloved Malmaison. Letters from certain people who always wish to meddle in the affairs of others advised her to settle in Italy with her son. She asked me to find out what the Emperor thought of this plan. For the

first time the idea occurred to her that she might be in the way, and that the Emperor might abandon her. This thought pained her deeply.

I arrived at Fontainebleau where all the court had assembled. My children were waiting for me there. The evening I arrived the Emperor came to see me with the Empress. He showed her to me with an air of satisfaction. "Look at her figure," he said. "If it is a girl it will be a little wife for your son Napoleon, for *she* must not go out of France or marry outside the family." Naturally we could not speak of my mother that evening. I asked him to receive me the following morning. When I talked with him I felt how pleased he would be if my mother of her own accord decided to live with her son in Italy.

"I am obliged to think of my wife's happiness," he said to me. "Things have not developed as I hoped they would. She is alarmed by your mother's attractiveness and the hold people know she has on me. I know this for a fact. Recently I wished to go out with my wife to Malmaison. I do not know whether she thought your mother was there, but she began to cry, and I was obliged to turn round and go somewhere else. However, whatever happens I shall never oblige the Empress Josephine to do anything she does not want to do. I shall always remember the sacrifices she made for me. If she wishes to settle at Rome I shall have her appointed governor of the city. At Brussels she could hold a brilliant court and at the same time do good to the country. It would be still better and more suitable if she were to go and live with her son and grandchildren. But write her that if she prefers to return to Malmaison I shall do nothing to prevent her."

I assured the Emperor that to return was the only course she desired to follow, and my mother arrived shortly afterwards. A little later I gave the Emperor a message from her to the effect that having been his wife

and Empress of the French she no longer wished for any other title, that all she desired was the right to live and die in her country, surrounded by her friends.

Since my return from Aix the Emperor had made a point of treating me with special favor. Sometimes he would say to me: "Come and see my wife. Sketch with her. Play the piano and sing with her. She would be delighted to have you do so and does not dare to ask you herself."

I was too familiar with social etiquette not to realize that it should have been the Empress who invited me. Moreover, it was neither natural nor polite for me to attempt to become intimate with her. The result was that she and I always remained on good terms because I never tried to force myself on her. Like everyone else I called in the evening, and she always paid more attention to me than she did to my sisters-in-law. Sometimes she even spoke to me about quite intimate matters. One day, for instance, she told me how, when her marriage had been decided on, Monsieur de Metternich in accordance with the instruction of the Emperor of Austria wished to tell her about the different persons with whom she was to live. He said that the Princess Pauline was the most beautiful person in the world, the Queen of Naples the wittiest, but that Queen Hortense was the only one she could really make a friend of. I was flattered to hear of this distinction in my favor and especially that she should tell me so herself. On all occasions I proved that I was devoted to her, and she always showed her interest in me, but her only close friend remained her lady in waiting [Maréchale Lannes, Duchesse de Montebello].

For the latter the Empress had a sort of adoration, which seemed strange to many people, but which anyone who can read the secrets of human nature can easily enough understand. A princess from her birth is surrounded by honors and attentions. Everyone seeks her

company, studies her tastes, seeks to foresee and fulfil her desires. She is accustomed to treat everyone on the same footing, everyone is alike to her, pleases her or bores her equally, because everyone acts in the same manner toward her. But if a person with whom she is constantly in contact appears to be interested in other things, other pleasures than those in which she shares, then the princess like those coquettes who, always sure of pleasing, only notice the men who pay no attention to them will be surprised and hurt at this person's indifference. A woman of a retiring nature is not likely to be either a flatterer or an *intrigante.* The wish to recapture this rebel, to subjugate her, occupies the mind of the princess as much as a serious affection might do and sometimes creates such an affection. This was the situation between the Empress and the Duchesse de Montebello.

The latter disliked life at court. Since the death of her husband, life at home, the education of her children, the company of a few friends were enough to make her happy. Far from seeking to hide the regrets her prominent position caused her she seemed to take pride in exposing them. Consequently, the moment she was absent the Empress would send her little notes. She could not do without her. The friends of the Duchess were the only French people the Empress really knew although she never saw them. She knew everything they did. At New Year's the Empress's great task was to choose attractive presents for the children of the Duchess. Madame de Montesquiou, the governess of the King of Rome, was jealous on his account. But the most extraordinary part of the whole matter was the slanderous rumor that people repeated, and that never had the least foundation in fact, namely that the Emperor cared for the Duchess. On the contrary they disliked one another, and it needed all the Emperor's strong sense of justice not to resent the strong influence another person wielded over his wife's mind. I have several times heard him say to the Em-

press: "You are making a great mistake if you think that the Duchess cares for you. The only persons she cares about are herself and her children. You are silly to become so attached to her."

Nevertheless he always put up with her, always was courteous, and did everything he could to have her treated with that respect to which she was entitled as a woman of high moral character and a friend to his wife.

In spite of all her qualities, it must be admitted that the Duchesse de Montebello was not the right person for her post as chief lady in waiting, perhaps because she did not take the trouble to be. She never bothered to inquire as to the position and rank of the persons introduced to the Empress and what should be done or avoided in connection with them. As a foreigner, entirely ignorant of the environment in which she found herself, the Empress frequently made mistakes, natural and excusable enough but such as society is not prepared to forgive in an Empress. Often, for instance, she would inquire about a husband's health from a wife who had just lost him on the field of battle and who with tears in her eyes was obliged to relate the story of the misfortune for which she had hoped to be consoled.

The Emperor's family, not without surprise, found that the Empress was inclined to keep them at a distance. My mother had always been ready to receive them and always treated them cordially. It was she who was constantly asked to say something or secure a favor which they did not venture to ask for themselves. How different things were now! No more intimacy, far more ceremony. Madame Mère herself felt the change.

The pretty face and winning ways of the Princess Pauline had made her the spoiled child of the family. She was allowed to do anything. Even the Emperor, who so frequently was severe toward others, let her do things for which anyone else would have been reprimanded. Everyone said, "She is nothing but a child."

And what a pretty child she was! What she said never seemed to be worth paying attention to, and I cannot understand why I should have felt so badly about the remarks she made when I came back to court. With great animation she reproached me for having been the cause of my children's losing the throne of Holland, of my husband's exile and all his misfortunes. This indictment was a shock to me. My reason and conscience both proved to me that I was innocent, yet my feeble strength was not able to repulse this false accusation. The ills I still suffered from made more acute the memories of those I sought to recall in order to justify myself. Princess Pauline, whose only interests in life were fashions and amusements, must have been surprised and perhaps pleased at having produced so marked an effect on anyone, when for the first time in her life she spoke about serious matters.

In fact the entire family was, I believe, sorry to see me return to court. I can understand being jealous when one's affections are involved, but not when it is merely a question of precedence, of more or less becoming dresses, of some more or less marked social success. The joy the Emperor's family had felt on my departure for Holland was an indication of their regret at seeing me return. Especially as they could now no longer reproach me for being there, since the future of my children was once more associated with France.

The Emperor, although he did not mean to do so, had done everything possible to inflame the jealousy his family felt toward us. He had for a long time treated me with special favor, because as he desired to adopt the son he wished the mother to be especially respected. How many times Caroline came and said to me: "I entertain the same way you do; I always act as you do, because I come and ask in advance how you are going to act; and yet the Emperor always holds you up to me as an example as though you were the only person who knows how to

behave. Then too he is all the time saying to Murat and his brothers, 'Look at Eugène.' How can he expect harmony to reign among us?"

Since then people so often told the Emperor that he favored us at the expense of his own family that he was forced to adopt the opposite course.

Madame Mère, who was worried about what was happening to her son Louis, thought of sending Monsieur Decazes to him. Monsieur Decazes, on his return to France from Holland and after I had refused to make him my chief secretary, had resumed his former post as judge of a court of the first instance in Paris. He had remained in touch with my husband. The Emperor's relatives thought that a letter from me might persuade my husband to return. I wrote it, but the curious thing was that the more I feared this return, the more I tried to have it take place in order to exculpate myself in my own mind of not wanting something which might make another person happy. I therefore placed my best carriage at the disposal of Monsieur Decazes, thinking it might be used by the King. I paid the expenses of several trips he made to Austria, and some months later on, hearing that my husband refused to come back to France, I was very glad not to be in any way to blame for this attitude.

The Emperor had given the King an allowance of 2,000,000 francs, of which 500,000 came from a forest near Saint Cloud, a domain which had been granted my second son. The rest was paid by the Treasury.[3] When the King refused to accept this sum the Emperor turned it over to me.[4] I paid all my husband's debts [5] and bestowed pensions upon those who had served him devotedly, even upon those people of whom I had often been forced to complain. Monsieur Decazes told me that my husband had given him a letter for me which the Emperor had confiscated, as he had also done several others addressed to the Senate, to the Secretary of the imperial

family, etc. That same evening the Emperor, next to whom I was seated, said to me very gravely: "Your husband is mad. He is writing to all the French authorities. He has written you a letter which will not be delivered to you. I have kept it. He wishes to be somebody and forgets what he owes to France and to me. He deserves that I punish him by abandoning his children."

I could not understand what these abrupt sentences meant. The last one brought tears to my eyes. The Emperor noticed it.

"Fortunately I am kind-hearted," he went on, "and people always count on that. It is not the fault of those poor children. But they would deserve to be pitied if they had only their father to look after them."

That was all I ever knew about the incident, and for a long time I kept wondering what new grounds for irritation the King might have given his brother. It was not until 1814 that I saw in the Gazette de Lausanne the text of my husband's statement to the Senate and the passage in it where he forbade me to accept anything from the Emperor. He left me his estate at Saint-Leu and all his private property, which in France had only consisted of his house in Paris and the country place of Saint-Leu. The latter was charming, brought in no revenue and cost more than 30,000 francs a year to keep up.

The trip to Fontainebleau was over. My mother had come back to Malmaison, and I settled down in my home in Paris, free for the first time to arrange my life in accordance with my tastes. My household had again been reorganized and established with all the importance due a person of my rank. The Emperor had given orders that this should be done, and he was right. He wished the princes to spend all their income in order that this money should go back to the people whence it had come. Madame la Comtesse de Caulaincourt, mother of the Duc de Vicence, was my chief lady in waiting. She had known me from my babyhood and was sincerely attached

to me. I had kept the Dutch lady in waiting who had accompanied me back to France, as well as my former ladies in waiting and my French officers. Monsieur de Marmol was especially attached to my children, and Abbé Bertrand was my private chaplain. Madame de Broc had come to live with me. Her bitter grief had given place to a gentle melancholy. Her affection for me seemed to fill her entire heart. I was equally fond of my friend, and constantly sought for her a man as exemplary as the husband she had lost. I thought of Monsieur de Pourtalès, the friend of Monsieur de Flahaut whom I had had appointed my mother's equerry. His fortune was very great, and his character charming, but it was all a question of time and of keeping Adèle in ignorance of my plans.

An indoor life would have been the only one which agreed with my constantly poor health, but I was forced to go occasionally in the evening to see the Emperor and attend every Sunday the family dinner he gave. My frequent trips to Malmaison also tired me, as did the crowd of people. I did not care about those who were always there and toward whom I no longer had the strength to make the least effort to be agreeable. The one thing I enjoyed was staying at home. I avoided receptions, concerts and the theater but gathered a little group of people about me, which was much discussed. All the persons belonging to this group were distinguished by their charm, their wit and their excellent reputation. I had made a very limited selection, the establishment of which gave me quite a little trouble. Everybody who was received at the court felt entitled to figure on my list, and this made it difficult for me whose only aim was to secure a quiet, intimate gathering and pleasant conversation.

In the morning I received no visitors. I would sketch with Adèle, and dine either alone or with her. In the evening, surrounded by my children I received, from

eight o'clock on, the people whose names figured on my list. We played or sang. The gentlemen could play billiards. On a large table in the middle of the room everyone found something with which to amuse himself.[6] The ladies sewed or chatted. Tea was served at ten o'clock. Frequently midnight or one o'clock struck while some animated discussion was still going on, which would have lasted still later had it not been for the hostess's poor health. I had great difficulty in persuading my officers not to remain standing as though they were on duty, but to join in our diversions. I wished my home to seem like a family gathering where politeness is the rule and where innocent mirth does not dispel the respectful attitude of the guests toward the hostess.

I had been so successful in forming a drawing-room such as I desired and such as rarely exists that it acquired a wider reputation than I wished. In spite of my giving receptions and balls everyone had the ambition to be admitted to my private parties. My sisters-in-law criticized me severely for allowing men to attend in ordinary dress-coats. I even feared the Emperor might not be pleased if he heard of it. He merely said to me one day, "People are saying that you have a clearing house of wit at your home."

"As usual people feel they have to be talking about us," I replied. "I would as soon have that sort of reputation as any other." No more was said.

It was natural that such gatherings should please me in several respects. I could say to myself: "Today these are my acquaintances; in ten years they will have become my friends. Slander will no longer be able to touch me. At least I shall have some defenders. Now people may meet me informally, judge me for themselves, and if I please them they will reward me with their affection. What more do I need?"

I shall not seek to hide the fact that it was the wish to see the man I loved which made me invite many others

and take extra pains to form an agreeable social circle. I never sent special invitations to those whom I had informed once and for all that their names were on my list. They were free to come or not as they chose. This is how I understand social life. I did not wish to impose a respect for my rank which would make them feel obliged to accept my invitation and perhaps refuse one they would have enjoyed more. This complete informality made admission to my circle a dearly sought privilege. If I happened to be absent one day I was sure that those who had not found me at home would return the following evening more eagerly than ever.

Monsieur de Flahaut was not one of the least assiduous of my guests. As soon as he came into the room, no matter how easy the conversation I was having might be, it at once became difficult for me. My wits deserted me as long as he was present. I could not find a word to say. I knew I should have to speak to him as to any other guest, but I could do so only by not looking at him, in a voice that was not my natural one. If he made a remark I did not seem to have heard it. Yet not a syllable he spoke was lost to me. Frequently he complained that I was not as pleasant to him as to the others. A smile informed him how welcome this reproof was to me, since it showed that I had been able to conceal the violence of my emotions.

Monsieur de Flahaut wrote me often. When I answered him I took no pains to hide my affection. It seemed that when he was absent I cared a thousand times more for him. I no longer had to struggle to preserve appearances and I should have reproached myself if I had not let him see how dear he was to me. Yet when I saw him again everything was different. He must have found me difficult to understand. I alone could know my varied emotions. It was when hostilities forced him into the midst of danger that I felt I should go mad with anxiety. I could talk about nothing else but Monsieur de

Flahaut to Adèle; he was the object of all my thoughts. But when he came back I was nervous and embarrassed. The only way I betrayed the fact that I cared for him was in my efforts to stifle it. I do not know whether I appeared to him to be utterly indifferent. But the persons who were near me could make no such mistake. They were too much interested in the feelings of her on whom they were dependent not to discover the secret it was so difficult for her to keep.

The clairvoyant friendship of Adèle had something admirable about it. If, leaning against the mantelpiece, Monsieur de Flahaut had managed to remain alone with me, if our conversation lasted longer than it should have done, she would come up and remind me that other persons were present who would feel offended if I did not speak to them. A desire to protect me made her sense the maliciousness of others, and her affection was always on the watch for means of preserving me from it. A word or a sign from her was at once understood, and my heart was always as grateful as it was docile to her suggestion. May I confess one of my faults that caused me the greatest suffering? I was jealous, and this jealousy was of the kind that embitters the soul because it does not utter a single complaint but consumes a person in silence.

Monsieur de Flahaut was a man whose qualities and weaknesses were of the type that best inspires such sentiments. He had an excellent mind, a quick wit and was charming and even brilliant, sensitive but superficial, more desirous of being liked than yearning to be loved. Completely absorbed in the task of charming any woman whose interest he happened to have aroused, he frequently hurt the feelings of the one whom he seemed to have forgotten. Eager though he was to see me, he was equally attracted by other pleasures which separated us. Although there was not one he would not have sacrificed for my sake, there was not one which he deliberately abstained from. I urged him to amuse himself, ashamed of my

secret impulse to restrain him, happy if he disobeyed me, alarmed if he obeyed too willingly, and always in the end wondering, since what he felt was what people call love, what name I should give to my own emotion. In spite of my eagerness to see him again I never once asked him, "Shall I see you tomorrow?" I always waited for him to express his desire to see me as I could only enjoy what was offered me spontaneously.

Many ladies seemed interested in Monsieur de Flahaut. I noticed this. If he had told me about it I should have believed him. I repeatedly told him that no lasting affection can exist between two people unless it is founded on mutual confidence, that such frankness excuses all faults, and since none of us are perfect at least we should try to be sincere. In vain he assured me that he could never love another woman, that people like me were too rarely met with, that it was I who had for the first time made him believe there was good in the world, that I was making him better, that he never would have the courage to be unfaithful to me. Yet in spite of all these assurances I was always making him confess some passing fancy, and the present like the future was troubled by them. I was too keenly aware that in view of his character I must anticipate some day his no longer caring for me. But I wished him to be the one to announce this to me, to come to me and say, "I love someone else." I insisted he should do this, so convinced was I that I would hold out my hand to the man who had just pierced my heart and even sympathize with the woman who had taken his affection from me. If that was not love it was something finer.

Every time I complained to Madame de Broc how unhappy I was she would say, "Certainly you have not that happiness which you once dreamed of. But look around you. Who is there who is perfectly happy? Fate has tied you irrevocably to a man with whom you cannot live and fate has separated you from him without even giving you any reason to blame yourself for this separa-

tion. After a long period of slavery you at last are free, mistress of your own actions. Your children are near you. You are enormously wealthy, you can do much good. You are loved and admired by all those who know you and yet you blame Providence."

Feeling the wisdom of these remarks, I conquered my discouragement and sought at least to bring happiness to others. I took particular pains to leave those about me entirely free. I do not believe I ever refused a single request that might give someone pleasure. Yet, in spite of this I saw people frequently discontented. If any complained that I gave them too much to do I at once relieved them of a part of their duties. Then they would complain that I did not pay enough attention to them. People tried to prove I was fussy. Even the young women I had with me and for whom I sought to find husbands accused me of being ungrateful and hard-hearted because I sent them away from me. How difficult it is for a princess to satisfy all the different personal ambitions that revolve about her. Perhaps one who is proud and haughty succeeds better. The more distant she is, the fewer favors she bestows, the more people value the least sign of graciousness on her part. If she gives them a look they are surprised and touched. People generally fear her; they hold themselves aloof and hardly dare as much as express an opinion about her. To belong to her household is considered a duty, and no one expects any marks of affection or intimacy. On the contrary a princess who is good, kind, willing to listen to anyone, allows all those with whom she comes in contact to consider themselves her friends. Much is expected of her, her slightest action is freely commented on. If she once mentions something she cares about, the person to whom she has spoken considers himself from then on entitled to know all her secret thoughts. If a stranger converses with her at too great length, others are jealous, criticize her, complain about her, and as they themselves misunder-

stand her actions they make others do so. This is the way in which those who call themselves our friends, and who consider themselves such, often do us more harm than enemies who are too far away to be able to wound us by their attacks.

In spite of these little drawbacks which are inseparable from a position of prominence my household was fairly calm and as united as it could possibly have been.

As for the Emperor's court it was serious and staid. It lacked that refinement of courtesy, that polish which are characteristic qualities of French society. A young man scarcely dared to speak to a young woman. He was afraid of being in the least attentive for fear of making himself conspicuous, which would indeed have been the case. The court was composed of so many different cliques that it was necessary to observe the utmost prudence. The women in general were remarkable for their good behavior, for their dignity which even became at times rather rigid, and for their modesty which was never awkwardness. One never heard a loud discussion. If one did not find there the wit, ease and courtliness of a Sévigné or La Fayette, or those amusements which flourished in the days when people's sole desire was to make themselves agreeable, yet one discovered on the part of the women an abundance of solid virtues, the assiduity of maternal devotion and all the duties it involves, a willingness to sacrifice idle amusements for evenings spent in serious occupations, and an ability in the conduct of business matters equal to that which the husband away at the front might have exercised had he been present. Moreover all the arts—music, painting, song and dance—were practiced with talent. On the other hand a woman who wrote poetry or took an interest in politics would have been made fun of. This was in accordance with the Emperor's tastes. He objected to the days when women had political influence. How often did he not say to my mother or me, when we made some simple remark or

asked for a position for one of our protégés, "Now then, now then, we are getting ready to be ruled by a distaff and I shall have to do embroidery."

The Emperor was so severe as regards personal morality that he frequently sent to the front young men who had been sufficiently attentive to some married women to run the risk of disturbing their married life. He was especially jealous of the reputation of the court ladies and of the wives of his generals. But his efforts to protect them frequently did the reverse, for people would openly discuss the reasons for these sudden departures, and it was even said that he caused them for reasons of his own—gossip that was never true. He merely sought to frighten the woman who might for an instant have thought of forgetting her duties. Once he said to me, "I am sure young men never dare to look at you. They are afraid of me." This idea amused him.

It was on purpose that the Emperor wished his court to be severe rather than entertaining. One day when the Queen of Naples was telling my mother, the Empress, about an evening she had spent at a masked ball and all the witty things she had said there, the Emperor interrupted her impatiently saying: "Once upon a time all that was amusing enough. It is not any more. A princess must set an example and behave in accordance with the rules of her day. The time for light and frivolous amusements has passed. Everything now must be serious and severe."

Yet he would occasionally be quite merry when alone with us. This was true particularly in the days when my mother was with him. On such occasions he whispered all sorts of remarks into her ear and if he thought I might have overheard them and feel embarrassed he would laugh till tears came to his eyes. Once, for instance, when my mother was present, he was telling me about his former success with the ladies, adding, "I never found a single one who resisted me."

"That was probably because you never tried one who was in the habit of resisting."

He began to laugh, pinched my ear till I could have cried and said to my mother, "Listen to what your daughter is saying about me. She thinks I have always been old."

I have always seen him more reserved with his new wife, but also more gentle and more anxious to please. He frequently urged her to enjoy the pleasures of her age. "If you like to dance," he said, "send for the music. Go and watch the masked balls. Visit the public buildings and state factories."

"No," replied the Empress, "not unless you go with me."

"But I have no time. Go with Hortense. The Parisians will be glad to catch a glimpse of you."

"No, I would rather stay here."

And that would be the end of the matter. If she kept him waiting for dinner, he would greet her with the words, "Ah! I see, you have been making yourself beautiful." Yet often he had been greatly displeased with my mother for an equally unimportant matter.

One day at one of the great receptions, when we were wearing all our diamonds, after he had complimented us on our appearance the Emperor caught sight of himself in the mirror and looking at his simple uniform of the Guard, said as he turned away, "One must be very vain to dress so simply." He charmed everyone who came near him when he gave way to his good-nature. No one who saw him in those moods would have guessed he was the man before whom all Europe trembled and whose greatness of mind impressed us as much as it did any other members of his court. He never appeared otherwise than grave in public. People imitated him and wherever he appeared he became the center of attention. Everyone hoped he would speak to him, and I have seen men at receptions given by the Empress decline to sit at

a card-table with young and pretty women and remain standing, in the hope that the Emperor, who sometimes liked to chat with those who were in the drawing-room doing nothing, might speak to them.

When the Emperor felt like talking there was not a subject on which he did not have something original to say. He never feared to utter his political views. Once when surrounded by a number of persons attached to the court he said: "I never thought of replacing the Bourbons on the throne. They would not have been able to make France happy for two reasons: because the nation has harmed them too much ever to trust them, and because they would never have been able to satisfy the claims of those they brought back with them. A new man was necessary, a man not contaminated by the excesses of the Revolution, who could unite all parties and who was strong enough to stabilize all the advantages the Revolution had won."

I believe that there never was a court where morals were as pure as at that of the Emperor. Yet few courts have ever been as much condemned. This is easily explained. On the one hand there were a few republicans who, angry at the brilliant positions which some of their former associates had achieved, sought, sarcastically, to assail the circles to which they had not been promoted. On the other were the former nobles, delighted at the revival of the traditional court etiquette, but at the same time remaining disdainful of the newer nobility and somewhat jealous of its laurels. As courtiers of the old régime they were obliged to find excuses for the pleasure they took in the splendor of the new court. When they went back to see their old relatives who had remained faithful to the old régime they criticized and made fun of the present conditions, seeking, at the price of a few witticisms, to secure forgiveness for their weakness in aspiring to share the new honors. How many efforts to secure a position people explained by saying, "It was

forced upon me." As Monsieur de Talleyrand put it: "I have a list of people who want to be forced."

The police system directed by the Duc de Rovigo also did a great deal of harm to the court ladies. His predecessor Fouché only harmed the Emperor when he obliged the latter to exile certain persons of the Faubourg Saint-Germain from Paris. Whenever a complaint was made to Fouché he would pretend to know nothing about it, blaming it on the Emperor's impetuous temperament, on the fact that there were a hundred other branches of the police department which he could not superintend. In the end he would promise to wait for a favorable moment and have the sentence of banishment lifted. Later, it is true, he would request the Emperor to rescind the order which he had himself asked for, thus giving himself all the credit and letting his master take all the blame. He thus made followers for himself, but he never bothered about drawing-room gossip or petty social intrigues.

The Duc de Rovigo, on the other hand, seemed to do nothing else than collect the slightest bits of information about everyone's private life. He acted as his own detective, wished to be the confidant of the ladies, stirred up quarrels between them, told stories which might or might not be true, spent all his morning making visits from one to another. If, in the Bois de Boulogne, a woman surrounded by her children and her friends happened to be speaking to a man and caught sight of the Duc de Rovigo she felt her reputation was lost. All our ladies did their best to avoid him. They declared he compromised them on purpose in order to make people forget about the person[7] to whom he was attached and toward whom society was distinctly hostile.

The Duc de Rovigo may have been brave, witty, devoted to his master and had other qualities besides, but only the most firmly rooted virtue can withstand the contact with that mass of corruption the police department.

What excuse has one to assume the right to pry into the secrets of others, and what can one respect if one does not respect the sanctity of family life? If it is necessary for the good of the state to carry on such investigations to a certain point, then the high morals of the man who does so should reassure the public as to the purity of his intentions. His character should offer society a guarantee for the power it bestows upon him. It was for these reasons that the Emperor when he appointed Monsieur de Lavallette director of the post office said to him, "I give you this post because you are the most honest man I know." Nor did Monsieur de Lavallette ever cause the slightest uneasiness.

Savary, although he was admired as the Emperor's aide-de-camp, did not meet with the same favor as cabinet minister. It was natural enough that the Emperor should wish to know what was going on at his court and especially what the members of his family were doing, but the minister had no right to inform others regarding his suspicions or his discoveries. I personally never had any reason to complain of him. On the contrary he only showed me consideration and esteem. But he did not like the Emperor's sisters and he did them a vast amount of harm by relating a thousand stories true or false, about their home-life, to which no one could witness, but which everyone afterwards repeated.

I persist in saying therefore that in spite of all the libels it was made the object of no court has ever been more moral or more strict than that of the Emperor. Many receptions were held. Besides the two formal gatherings in the state apartments there was twice a week either a play or a concert given by the Empress in her apartment on a little stage. The fact that the most distinguished artists were present did not change the chilly and stilted atmosphere. The entertainment became so formal that it lost all gaiety. At my mother's house, on the contrary, in her exile at Malmaison, everything was

gracious and pleasant. Dignity did not prevent enjoyment. The young and talented ladies whom she had gathered about her in addition to her ladies in waiting made the evenings delightful. People were glad to attend in spite of her living out of town and having no more favors to bestow.

The manners of the gentlemen of that day, although not as gracious or as flattering as they are said to have been in earlier times, had unquestionably improved since the establishment of the Empire. Men were simple, sincere and polite. In the early days of the Consulate I had seen young republicans holding their heads very high, apparently unwilling to admit that anyone could be their superior. Since then I have seen young nobles who gave themselves disdainful airs, apparently unwilling to admit that anyone could be their equal. Both in time modified their attitude and improved by doing so.

According to the criticisms of those who are not received there no court can exist without flatterers and sycophants. It is the fashion to apply these terms to all those who belong to a court. I can imagine that under some feeble king everyone may seek to make himself the favorite and can do so by committing some base action. I can also admit that under a powerful king the man who obtains the sovereign's favor may deserve the epithet of "courtier" in a derogatory sense, if the desire for advancement makes him prefer flattery to plain-speaking. But a palace where well-brought-up people meet is not different from any private residence except that in the former there exist traditional rules of conduct which guide one's behavior, whereas in the latter one follows the taste and inclination of the lady of the house. How many young men there are who for fear of the ridicule associated with the term "courtling" adopt a distant tone, an insolent manner and an air of despising those about them. If they are clever this weakness does not last long. They themselves become aware that their attitude is not

to their advantage, and they adopt those manners they once sought to avoid and become in their turn courtiers in all that that word implies in the way of courtesy and politeness.

One must be fair and admit that in society the things which are attractive are consideration for women, kindliness toward all, delicate thoughtfulness for others, polished manner of speech, correctness of dress, and especially those expressions of respect which can so easily be uttered and which are so agreeable to hear. I know that corruption may be hidden away behind all this, but at least it is pleasant to meet at every step what appears to be virtue. Moreover what better tribute can you pay to virtue than to seek to wear its colors in order to charm? Why does not the inner self correspond to this brilliant exterior? Because the latter too often is a cloak beneath which the adventurer hides his maneuvers. As for flattery, that fault which is so often attributed to courtiers, no one need be ashamed of it. What greater flatterer is there than a king? How many times he says without meaning it: "I depend on your devotion to my cause; I place my honor in your hands." If he hears praise addressed to him, does he in turn not give it to others? To be sure this is of no importance in one case or the other. It is merely a conventional form of speech which deceives no one. If I appear to be defending here the manners one finds at court, I nevertheless think one should wish a noble sincerity to be admired in all ranks of society.

About this time I made my appearance at Ecouen as *princesse protectrice* of the school. The institution was the result of a fine moment of enthusiasm on the part of the Emperor. The day after the Battle of Austerlitz, touched by the loss of so many brave men whose death had added to his own glory, he decreed while still on the field of battle that he was prepared to adopt the children of all those who had lost their lives on that famous occa-

sion. On his return, while he was still hesitating as to how to put his decree into effect on account of his opinion that girls should be brought up by their mothers, he sent for Madame Campan, consulted her and finally said: "I shall not limit myself to provide an education for a small number of girls. I do not like little things, they are of no value. Saint-Cyr was only a flower-garland which the love of Louis XIV offered Madame de Maintenon. Two hundred and fifty daughters of nobles were nothing compared to eight thousand families of poor gentlefolk. I shall educate four or five hundred girls or none at all and I shall reform public morals."

The execution of this plan was postponed, but after[8] the Battle of Friedland he wrote with his own hand and drew up a very complete set of instructions, which have ever since been strictly observed in this institution. My reception at Ecouen was a touching one. I was happy every time I visited this place where so many young hearts were brought up to love me and where I again experienced the emotions of my childhood and that light-heartedness, that confidence in others which life too quickly effaces.

The establishment was far superior to Saint-Cyr. It is true that Madame Campan devoted all her remarkable talents to its success. I had a road made connecting Saint-Leu and Ecouen in order to go there as often as my health permitted. The school at Saint Denis was also organized, as well as six other schools for orphan girls where no mere social accomplishments were taught, but where the pupils learned things only of practical value. I had all these institutions under my protection. It was as if I were the mother of all the girls in France. In their prayers my name and that of the Emperor were the only two specially mentioned.[9] Consequently people were jealous of me. The Empress was frequently told it was she who should have this position. Indeed she even came to wish that she did have it, but the Emperor always

kept it for me. For her he had organized a Mother's Aid Society, and Madame Mère was placed at the head of all the French Sisters of Charity. Thus it was to his family that the Emperor confided the care of the young and the unfortunate.

The time of the Empress's confinement drew near. The Grand Duc de Wurzburg was in Paris. A page came one evening to fetch me because the Empress was feeling the first birth pains. I hastened to the Tuileries. All the court had assembled there. In the Empress's room there were the Emperor, Madame Mère, Madame la Comtesse de Montesquiou, the governess, Madame de Montebello, chief lady in waiting. Madame de Luçay, lady of the wardrobe, Madame de Boubers, whom I had given the Emperor to be assistant governess to his children, Madame de Mesgrigny, who had the same title, all the women, the doctors and *accoucheurs*. Two young *dames d'annonce* from Ecouen remained in the little cabinet between the bedroom and the drawing-room in which we were—my brother, the Grand Duc de Wurzburg, the Princess Pauline, the Queen of Spain and I. All the other drawing-rooms were filled with members of the court and other officials. The Emperor came in from time to time and told us how things were going. According to whether the pain was more or less acute he seemed more or less nervous. He was worried that the labor should last so long and asked us whether this might not have unfortunate results for the mother or child. He did not dare to entertain the hope of having a son. It was clear that he was trying to accept the contrary. Nevertheless he inquired carefully if there were no signs by which one could tell in advance the sex of the child, and all his questions betrayed his anxiety.

I was so tired that about four o'clock I accepted the offer of one of the *dames d'annonce* to let me use her room.[10] I threw myself, fully dressed, on the bed and told her I was to be called if she heard the Empress begin

to scream. During my sleep the pains had subsided. It was believed the delivery would not take place immediately, and everyone was advised to go and rest. About seven o'clock the pains began again. The child presented itself badly. The *accoucheur* almost lost his mind when the Emperor calmly told him he should act as he would in the case of a woman of the lowest class and above all try to save the mother. The Empress was therefore delivered with forceps. The Emperor did not leave her side an instant. He held her in his arms and tried to encourage her, but he himself was so seriously shaken by the sight of his wife's suffering that for the rest of the day he was afflicted with a sort of nervous trembling.

About eight o'clock in the morning my *dame d'annonce* suddenly entered the room where I was resting and told me, with tears, "The Empress is uttering terrible cries." I hurried downstairs and found the Emperor leaving his wife's room. He was pale and hardly able to breathe. "It is over,"[11] he said to me; "she is safe." He looked so miserable that I timidly asked him, "Is it a boy?" "Yes," he replied with an effort. On hearing this I embraced him, but he had such difficulty in breathing that he pushed me aside.

"Ah," he said, "I cannot grasp all that happiness. The poor woman suffered so."

He left me to give orders to have the hundred cannon shots fired. I entered the Empress's room. She was still on her bed of pain, and the *accoucheur* was beside her. I approached the midwife who held the child. He appeared to me to be strong and healthy. I next went over to the Empress and congratulated her. There were so many people in the room that I left. I found the Emperor so deeply moved by the anxiety for his wife which he had just experienced that, in order to master his painful emotion, he assumed a grave air instead of showing his delight. This serious air contrasted with the enthusiasm everyone else displayed. People were surprised not

to find on his features that calm contentment which happiness gives, especially at such a moment when Providence had answered his prayers. The more complete this answer had been, the more gratitude he was expected to show. His attitude was severely criticized. People thought he lacked feeling, while as a matter of fact it was one of the occasions on which I saw him the most deeply moved. To forget all thoughts of ambition and the future, to remain only a fond husband at the moment when you have become a happy father, surely this shows that the heart has a greater influence than all the rest. For my own part I confess I was embarrassed by the sympathetic and curious glances I received.

The sight of the Emperor's emotion had touched me, and I had not given a thought to the fact that this birth increased the distance which separated my sons from the throne. I had hoped his wishes would be fulfilled, just as a child hopes to see his father or his benefactor contented. The idea that my children might wear the crown of France had not occurred to me. At least I had never desired them to do so, and if there was any sacrifice to be made I had made it on the day of the divorce. I therefore sincerely shared the Emperor's joy, but how awkward and embarrassed you become when you see that people judge your conduct in accordance with their own ideas. People think you should be sad, see that you are happy, and conclude you are a hypocrite. Since strangers feel the need of praising or criticizing you, you are obliged to behave as they wish you to, hide a kind thought as you would conceal an evil one, or, if you are sincere, pay the penalty. On this occasion I acted as I did frequently; I let myself be swayed by my feelings. I knew they were kindly ones, and from the moment I considered them nothing to be ashamed of, I paid little attention to how they might seem to others.

The Emperor gave his son the title of King of Rome. He was baptized privately that same evening in the

chapel. I was present, and two months later his public baptism took place at Notre Dame. The Emperor of Austria and the King of Naples were the godfathers. Madame Mère and the Queen of Naples were the godmothers. The Grand Duc de Wurzburg represented the Emperor of Austria, and I was to take the place of the Queen of Naples. When Grand Marshal Duroc came and announced this to me I refused. I felt that the Queen of Naples could have someone else represent her and I did not care to be present at this ceremony held in the same church where my son was buried.[12]

My refusal annoyed the Emperor, to whom I had not explained my reasons. He considered it extraordinary that I would not hold his son at the font. He believed I considered it beneath my dignity to act on behalf of someone else. The matter was discussed at a cabinet meeting. It was pointed out that it would not be the first time one princess took another's place, that she could not refuse to do so and that my refusal would not be accepted. The evening before the ceremony I called on the Emperor just as he was retiring. I stepped forward to beg him not to insist on my presence at the ceremony, giving as excuse that I did not feel strong enough for it. He turned away abruptly and said he had not intended to humiliate me when he did me the honor to ask me to carry his son. I returned home, oppressed in spirits and not knowing what course to pursue.

Since the death of my son I had not had the courage to enter the church of Notre Dame where his body lay. It seemed that I must now make my first visit to this place, and in the midst of a brilliant court adorned with all my diamonds, covered with flowers and giving all signs of joy, tread perhaps on that hallowed spot where his bones were lying. I did not feel I had the courage to do this.

"I shall not be able to control my emotion," I told Adèle. "Should I not avoid making a scene in public?"

She reminded me of the Emperor's annoyance, pointing out that he would be angry with me without having understood my motives. Finally, I decided to go at once to Notre Dame so that by visiting it alone, I might get over the shock of the first vivid impressions and have more strength to endure my feelings on the morrow. Adèle opposed my wishes. She feared the experience might be more than my feeble health could bear.

"At least I shall be there alone with you," I exclaimed. "No one will intrude on my sad thoughts, and tomorrow I shall be able to banish them from my mind." It was then midnight.

In a plain carriage without liveried attendants I arrived alone with Adèle in front of the portals of Notre Dame. The church was shut. I went to the archbishop's palace near by, where after a little argument the gatekeeper consented to admit us to the vast edifice, so imposing on account of its memories, yet visualizing to a mother who sees it rise above the coffin of her son only a symbol of her grief.

Everything was ready for the baptismal ceremonies. Some workmen far in the back of the church were still completing their task. The dim light of their feeble lanterns, the sound of their hammers occasionally breaking the silence, so like that of the tomb especially to one whose mind was haunted by thoughts of death—all this combined to fill my heart with feelings of terror and sadness. Everything that had been cruel and bitter in the past rose before me. It overwhelmed me. Unable to bear up under the weight of my sorrow I fell on my knees in front of the altar and poured forth torrents of tears. The old doorkeeper, lantern in hand, looked at me with astonishment. He helped Adèle bear me away from this mournful scene.

The next morning I reentered the church in state. The clergy had come to the main entrance to meet us. Standing up next to the Empress, to whom an address was

being made, I remembered how a few years before they had come on the same spot to meet the body of my poor child. My courage nearly failed me, but my previous day's visit had strengthened it, and no one noticed the strain I was under.

The celebrations in honor of the christening were magnificent. I attended those held at the Hôtel de Ville and at Saint Cloud. Finally, unable to stand all these ceremonies any longer, I left to take the waters at Aix-en-Savoie. The Emperor during my absence gave my children permission to live at the Pavillon d'Italie. Since the birth of the King of Rome they had continued to attend their uncle's luncheon as they had done previously. He always received them pleasantly, making them sit beside him, although there was hardly any room for them, as his lunch was served rapidly on a small, round, one-legged table. This was the hour when he saw people who were not received at court, distinguished artists, his architects with whom he discussed the beautifying of Paris, and occasionally Talma (the actor), a fact which gave rise to the ridiculous report that the Emperor took lessons in diction from him.[13]

The Empress Josephine was very anxious to see the King of Rome. Madame de Montesquiou took him one day to Bagatelle where she also went. She fondled him a great deal and could not refrain from weeping as she kissed him and exclaimed, "Ah, dear child, some day perhaps you will know how much you cost me." The Emperor paid my mother a visit which pained the Empress Marie Louise. He had however taken every precaution to avoid her hearing of it. Fearing to increase her uneasiness he did not return again.

The waters at Aix did me good. My brother came to see me on his way back to Italy and urged me to take advantage of being so near to make the acquaintance of his young family, but I fell ill. My brother, anxious about my health, crossed the Simplon Pass, but I was

obliged to return to France without having carried out that pleasant plan.

The Emperor in the meanwhile had made a trip through Holland with the Empress. While there they saw my apartments, heard details regarding my domestic life and came back sympathizing with me more than ever.

I wished to find a governor for my children. Monsieur de Las Cases and Monsieur de Saint-Aulaire applied for the post. I spoke to the Emperor about the matter. He said to me: "France will be sorry to see the education of your children placed in the hands of a noble. It is one of the heroes of my army who should bring up French princes." The choice seemed to me so difficult that it was postponed.

The Queen of Naples, to whom a little matter of nine hundred miles did not matter as a journey, arrived in Paris unexpectedly and before we even had heard of her departure from Naples. Certain difficulties had arisen between the Emperor and her husband, who having been made King of Naples by the Emperor also wished to be independent. She arrived in the hope of reconciling them. Murat had for a long time pretended to be deeply attached to the Emperor. He declared he could not leave him for more than twenty-four hours. He would have refused all the thrones in the world in order to be near his idol and had no other ambition, so he said, than to serve him. Caroline was always saying, "The Emperor is like a god to my husband. I should be jealous of such devotion." And the Emperor himself, although he frequently said [14] that a monarch should be feared during his lifetime and loved only after his death, had been deceived by these demonstrations of affection on the part of Murat, whom he believed utterly devoted to his interests.

Murat was a good man. He was dashingly brave, and possessed military talents together with a great desire to please and to be admired. He sought to have good manners and overdid them. One saw by his exaggerated

dress and his attentions to the ladies that he wished to resemble the Villarceaux and Sévignés of the days of Louis XIV. These famous courtiers were the models he had chosen, but the rough hearty republican could not be completely hidden, and the mixture of the two opposite types of character would have been ridiculous at times if one had not been conscious of the honest, frank soldier in the background who reconciled the puppets one to the other. Consequently, in spite of his male and martial beauty he was a far less dangerous person than he imagined. He had an excellent heart, a mediocre mind, and the rise of his fortunes had been too rapid not to have slightly turned his head. Ambition without those qualities which justify it is a despicable thing, and only really great men can make it into a virtue. The ambition of Murat was a result of his good fortune, and after being a distinguished general he became a second-rate monarch. He made me smile one day while he was still only Grand Duc de Berg. He was complaining about the Emperor who wished to annex the city of Wesel to France. "The Emperor had no right to take that town away from me," he declared. "It was not he who gave it to me. I obtained it through a treaty with the King of Prussia." And who was it who had made that treaty? Who had given him his duchy, the town and everything else? Another time when the Emperor was reproaching him for extracting too much money from his duchy of Berg Murat said with his slightly Gascon accent, "What do you mean, Sire? I spend my own on it."

The Queen of Naples had always taken her husband's part in his relations with the Emperor, but when she was alone with him her equal desire for power caused constant friction between them.

"I am unhappier than you are," she said one day to me. "Louis cannot be more jealous or disagreeable than Murat. It is natural enough that I should wish to be the first person informed of what is going on in my kingdom.

But what trouble it gives me! I am obliged to send out my valet secretly to meet the minister of foreign affairs or the chief of police by appointment down by the harbor. If there is any news it is sent me immediately, but the fear the King inspires is so great that the minister when I see him again is pale and trembling and eagerly asks whether I burned the paper that might endanger him. Tell me, can one submit to this sort of treatment?"

Far from arousing my compassion she only showed me the King was right in being suspicious of a Queen who bribed all the ministers in order to obtain secret information without his knowing it. I considered that our lives were as different as our characters.

No one could possess to the same degree as Caroline the art of making herself agreeable and pleasing by adopting an attitude that had in it both a certain Oriental dignity and the supple grace of the odalisque. To be sure, at times a little claw emerged beneath the velvety touch of her caress, but a most carefully calculated abandon and the most gracious manner promptly cured the wound and captivated you anew. Proud, brave, persevering, passionate, careless and variable as were her moods, the same charms which attracted people to her could not mask her desire to secure all power for herself, nor her jealousy of the successes of others. Such was the Queen of Naples. We had for a long time been friendly when a petty incident separated us.

The Emperor decided there were to be two elaborate balls given at court, one in fancy dress, the other masked. The Princesses were to be asked to present formal pageants. Caroline, who lived at the Tuileries, heard the news first, and instead of talking the matter over with me at once drew up a list of the handsomest women and most popular men and sent out invitations to them to appear in her performance. I was at home in the evening with my ladies in waiting, the officers belonging to my household, and a few young men whom I knew

when the grand marshal of the palace appeared with the Emperor's invitation, which the Queen of Naples was supposed to have sent me the day before. I feared the task of rehearsing and carrying out a pageant would greatly tire me. I wished to decline, but everyone protested against my doing so. People pointed out that it was not the Queen of Naples who should do the honors of the Court of France. I should not submit to having my place taken like that and risk at the same time angering the Emperor. Moreover, my friends considered that dancing instead of tiring me would do me good, and they promised to take all the other trouble off my shoulders. Especially they agreed to prevent my being obliged to talk much, as that would tire me, and to carry out my orders without discussion. I allowed myself to be convinced and accepted the offers of the young men who happened to be present. Among them were Messieurs de Sainte-Aulaire, Germain, de Flahaut, de Canouville and several others. They all asked to be included in my ballet and suggested that I send word immediately to other persons I wished to include, being convinced, so they said, that the latter would prefer to be with me rather than with the Queen of Naples. I therefore sent out my chamberlain, who arrived at the same time as the Queen's cards of invitation. The written invitations were all refused, the verbal ones accepted. The Queen was greatly vexed and complained to the Emperor, who paid no attention to her. The court was large enough to allow both pageants to be composed of pretty women, but mine included the better dancers, and the absence of these made a difference in the general effect.

The Queen of Naples together with Princess Pauline had decided to present an allegory representing the reunion of Rome and France. She had selected the day of the costume ball. Much to my satisfaction I had been given that of the masked ball, which was to take place several days later.[15]

The rivalry which sprang up between the performers in the two pageants was really amusing. The men, even the least frivolous, took the matter seriously. People called with sincere regret to inform me that the other pageant contained many clever and witty allusions in praise of the Emperor of France, and so on. I was urged not to be in any way inferior and to choose some allegorical subject also. I needed all the eloquence of my feeble voice to say repeatedly that we were not asked to dance in order to pay compliments to the Emperor. I knew he would not care for them and I believed personally that society people never danced well enough to undertake to execute *pas seuls,* which should be performed only by professional artists who are sure of their skill. Moreover, an allegory acted out by people whom one recognizes may easily seem silly, whereas the attractiveness of a society pageant lies entirely in the beauty and richness of the costumes displayed, the way in which the colors harmonize, the good taste shown in the dances performed and the perfection of the whole spectacle.

Another time people came and begged me to allow them to add more ornaments to the costumes. Each of them was willing to sacrifice the general effect for his private convenience, but as it was I who gave the costumes I insisted that my wishes be carried out. I sometimes felt like laughing when I saw the grief and disappointment caused by my decisions, especially when certain inquisitive people had succeeded in discovering all the marvelous features which were to be included in the rival pageant.

On the day the ball was to take place the theater of the Tuileries was transformed into a ballroom. The Emperor was seated on a raised platform between the Empress and me. All the court and important foreign visitors filled the hall itself, and the boxes were given to the Parisians.

The beauty and the jewelry of the two princesses were

dazzling. One of them represented Rome, the other France.[16] Their charming faces, their little helmets, their shields covered with diamonds and colored stones sparkled gaily. The other women, dressed as water nymphs of the Tiber, the Hours, Iris, were all handsome and graceful, but the faces of the equerries and chamberlains, which one recognized as impersonating Stars, Zephyrs and Apollos, aroused mirth. The pantomime did not seem appropriate either to the dignity of the persons acting in it or to the place where it was being performed.

After the performance of the masque the Empress and I opened the ball with a French square dance. Later other dances followed. The Emperor meanwhile went about speaking to everybody. He did not say a word about the pageant, but the next evening when I arrived to call on him and the Queen of Naples was also present, he said in a rather impatient tone: "Where did you get the idea for your ballet? It was all nonsense. Rome has submitted to France, but it is not happy about it. Whoever gave you the idea of showing her as pleased and satisfied at being a dependent state? It was a ridiculous piece of flattery. I know of course that you only wished to look pretty and wear a handsome costume, but you could find other subjects and not try and set politics to music." Then turning to me he added: "How about you? Are you too going to give us some sort of silly show? I warn you I don't like compliments."

I hastened to say that my masque had nothing to do either with politics or with him.

"All the better," he said. Then, because he saw how marked a superiority he was just then giving me over to his sister, who after all had only been trying to please him, or perhaps because he felt like finding fault and recalled subjects that lent themselves to his humor, he continued as he walked up and down the drawing-room: "Ah, these young women! They are harder to keep in

order than a regiment. After all I don't bite people's heads off. One can speak to me, consult me about what one is going to do. Not a bit of it. These ladies act as they choose. Yet in the position we occupy everything we do is important."

Then speaking directly to me he went on: "You, for example, what were you thinking of when you dressed up your son as a Polish lancer? Do you know I came near having war on your account? Do you know that Kourakin [17] has complained about it, and the rumor has got about that I intend to make your son King of Poland? And what right has he to wear the epaulette of a captain? One must have fought to obtain that. You knew I made him take off his Dutch decorations because I do not wish any child belonging to the imperial family of France to wear a medal he has not earned. My family must do as I did and win everything at the point of the sword. If after all," he added more gently, "in order to have your son look well he must have a uniform, well, then dress him as a Red Lancer of the Dutch Guard. I will even go so far as to let him wear a second lieutenant's epaulette, which I hope he will later earn himself."

I had made no attempt to reply as long as the Emperor was speaking, for it was my mother who had made the Polish uniform as a New Year's present. The tailor had put on an epaulette and, as a matter of fact, I had never noticed it nor had anyone else.

I returned home well pleased, nevertheless, at having insisted on keeping my pageant the way I wanted it, because I saw that my ideas on the matter were the same as the Emperor's. The costumes I had chosen were dazzling ones. Twenty-four ladies represented the priestesses of the Sun; they were all dressed in gold. Twelve ladies and twelve gentlemen were Peruvians, with gold cloth and red plumes covered with diamonds and rubies. I as high priestess was all in silver, white plumes and white diamonds. Eight ladies also in silver and with

white plumes and diamonds and turquoise ornaments surrounded me. All the performers wore little black masks and executed their dances in front of the Sun, which was carried by the priestesses. Gardel had directed this pageant, which was so much admired that even court etiquette could not prevent violent expressions of enthusiasm on the part of the spectators. At supper the Emperor said to the Queen of Naples, "Ah, that was better, much better than yours."

As I was masked I received after our performance quantities of compliments which the fact that I was disguised permitted people to make me. There was no raised platform or throne. Everybody in the room was on the same level, and all wore masks. A domino whom I recognized spoke to me and said, "How dazzling you are! One cannot look at you."

"I should make a good prize, should not I, with all the diamonds I have on?"

"You know very well," he replied, "that the most beautiful diamond of all, the diamond that is simply priceless, is the one hidden under all the rest."

The domino was the Emperor, and compliments from him were so rare that these remarks flattered me greatly.

The Queen of Naples and the Princess Pauline never forgave me for having scored so evident a triumph even in a matter of such slight importance.

The Emperor liked masked balls. He attended one or two a year, either at the house of the Lord Chancellor or at that of the Prince de Neuchâtel. It might have seemed difficult to discover what pleasure he found there, for he never spoke a word. I, however, could understand him, for I too liked them and I was not any more communicative than he was. To be able to watch people without being noticed or followed is a novel sensation for people who are always being stared at. When you are constantly surrounded with ceremony it is sometimes a pleasure to lose yourself in a crowd. As soon as he

arrived at one of the balls he sent for me or the Queen of Naples because he thought he would be less readily recognized if he were with a woman. We would walk about without speaking. Sometimes he would ask me, "Who is that person?" I had no idea and I would try to find out. "How are you, handsome masquerader?" or "What is your name?" were the only phrases I could think of, and my mental effort stopped there. If people guessed who we were they would step aside with a deep bow. If not they would turn their backs on us, exclaiming, "How silly they are!" This would amuse the Emperor as much as it did me. After an hour or two of strolling about and looking for the Empress, who was doing the same thing with the Duchesse de Montebello, we would go to supper with the Emperor, the Empress, and the prominent people who happened to be present. Each one would relate the exploits he had performed in the ballroom. The only amusement the Emperor had had was that of not being recognized, or at least believing he was not recognized, and when people said he was delightful at a ball, that everybody wondered who he could be, this was doubtless a form of humor.

At one of these balls when I was not with the Emperor I happened to sit down to rest on a bench. I caught sight of Monsieur de Flahaut as he passed but did not venture to speak to him although I wanted to do so, for I fancied that everyone knew who I was. A young and very distinguished-looking man came and sat beside me. He seemed rather unhappy. I had seen him once or twice at my formal balls, but he had scarcely heard my voice. I spoke to him in a bantering manner. During our talk he asked me about all the people who went by and was surprised to find that I knew so many of them. I aroused his curiosity. He did not want to leave and overwhelmed me with questions: "What do you do all day? Are you married? Have you brothers, or sisters, or children?" Each of his questions made me withdraw

NAPOLEON
Portrait by Raffet from the
Collection of Prince Napoleon

into myself. In the midst of this frivolous scene, which had momentarily distracted my thoughts from my troubles, these questions recalled the realities of life. Pain accompanied such reminders and took my mind far from the gay merrymaking which surrounded me and which for an instant had assuaged my distress. Especially when I heard the phrase, "How many children have you?" the loss of my son came so vividly to my mind that I could not conceal my grief. Forgetting that I was masked I was embarrassed at succumbing so easily to my feelings in the presence of a stranger. For I was unable completely to conceal my emotions and I regretted the fact. To disclose the secrets of your heart, no matter how innocent they may be, as was the case in the present instance, is to reveal too much; it robs friendship of something to which it alone is entitled.

I hastened to escape from the sympathy of this young man and his assiduities. I made him give me his word he would not try to discover my identity and I left with my companions. I do not know whether he kept his promise, but very shortly afterwards at a ball I saw him looking at me earnestly. Later he wrote me a passionate letter, telling me that he had been in Holland and heard General Bruno speak about me. My sorrows had made a deep impression on him. In looking at the places where I had lived, he came to have only one wish, to meet some day the woman who people told him had been so unhappy, whom he loved without having seen and to whose service he wished henceforward to devote the rest of his life. I was so much upset by this letter that I decided to ask Monsieur de Flahaut's advice. He told me that men were presumptuous, that they rarely believe in a woman's virtue, that one must be on one's guard against them and especially must never reply to their letters. I followed his advice, but I was worried at the idea that this young man [18] could have misjudged my character since he dared to talk about love to me. Moreover, since it is generally

considered that persons of higher rank are always the first to make advances I felt that I was almost to blame because I had been the first to speak, this in spite of the fact that our talk had been quite a simple one and his letter had received no answer. Soon I learned he was unhappy; my silence had only further inflamed his passion instead of, as I had hoped, calming it. He even dared to call on my ladies in waiting and appeared to be quite desperate. I was deeply troubled and my only thought was how I could cure him. Since this method had succeeded with others, one day I asked him to call and said: "Sir, my high rank may have made an impression on your imagination, but you cannot be in love with someone you do not know. Not only do I repulse your advances, I do not believe you are sincere. If you imagined that I might be attracted toward you because I spoke to you at the masked ball, you are mistaken. It all happened by chance. I cannot laugh at sorrow, but I cannot admit exaggerated sentimentality. Prove to me that I deserve your esteem by ceasing to think about me. I promise you to respect you under those conditions." With that I turned away.

When I repeated this conversation to Monsieur de Flahaut he said: "You believe that this is the way to make people cease to care for you? The better they know you the more they will love you."

"At least they will have respect for me," I answered. "That is all I require. You may be sure that if women—without any coquetry, without that air of meaning the opposite of what they say—should act as I do, they would have more friends and there would be fewer of those love affairs that end in bitter quarrels."

I was again right in this case, for the young man afterwards told me that I had done him a great service in speaking to him frankly, and later he proved to me his sincere devotion.

CHAPTER XI

FROM THE CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA TO THE FIRST ABDICATION (1812–1814)

The Carnival of 1812—Eugène in Paris—Napoleon's Return from Russia—Eugène and the Grande Armée—The Retreat from Russia—The Carnival of 1813—The Death of Madame de Broc at Aix-en-Savoie—Hopes of Peace—The Invasion—The Imperial Treasure—Napoleon Sets Out on the Campaign of France—Paris Is Threatened—March 28—The Departure of the Empress—The Departure of the Queen—At Glatigny, Trianon and Rambouillet—News of the Emperor—The Queen at Rambouillet—Empress Marie Louise—The Departure for Malmaison.

NEVER has the carnival been as brilliant as that of the winter of 1812. Balls and receptions followed one another constantly and it seemed as though their clamor were intended to cover the silent preparations for the most formidable military expedition that had ever been undertaken. People kept leaving Paris so frequently that everyone's attention turned north.

France was contented. All ambitions were satisfied, all desires fulfilled. Suddenly a spirit of restlessness appeared. The Emperor could not ignore it. His various police departments and the letters he received from members of all political parties informed him of the state of public opinion. He alone read his secret reports and burned them at once. He never either answered them or criticized them, but kept informed of exactly what was being said.[1] Although he sometimes admitted the wisdom of some of the advice, his far-seeing mind discarded everything that might turn him from his ultimate goal, the final defeat of England and the triumph of France. His plans had been made. He presented them so skilfully and with such strong arguments that at his Cabinet Council he obtained everyone's approval. But France,

unable to hear his voice, distrusted the idea of a war which she did not desire. The Emperor persisted in thinking that it was the last effort required, that it would lead to a final peace. He thought that French courage could achieve anything. And he allowed nothing to interfere with his plans.

My brother was called to Paris. He frankly pointed out the state of public opinion and the general irritation of the countries through which he had so often passed. The Emperor did not say a word in reply. It was only in the Cabinet Council that he allowed matters to be discussed. Eugène told me how much he regretted this. He was worried also about the reason for which he had been summoned to Paris. The Emperor wished to make him Regent of France during his absence.[2] When he informed my brother of this he looked at him hard. He could not doubt his loyalty, but the post to which he was appointing Eugène was an all-important one. My brother replied that he would prefer to remain in command of his army corps. As the Emperor felt that a nation which is discontented needs new objects for its affections, and because rumors of Eugène's nomination had been received with too much joy, nothing more was said about it.

The Emperor could not be jealous. No one was his equal. Yet the lesson of history, with which his fine mind was so familiar, had taught him all too well to guess men's motives and to distrust them. He had seen popularity arouse ambition even in the most humble person. Consequently he was always looking for the man on whom he could most thoroughly rely. When he had discovered him and advanced him in rank the Emperor still took care to keep him dependent upon him both for fortune and for future advancement. If public opinion, which knows no law, became too enthusiastic about someone, the Emperor would take care to show less favor toward him, to dole it out sparingly, for he was aware

of the importance of every one of his acts and foresaw their results. If a feeble monarch is wrong not to be more suspicious of those who are too ambitious, a ruler who is strong makes an equal mistake not to rely more completely on disinterested devotion. Under the reign of a great man it too often happens that everything revolves around him. Others do not count. Their importance lessens as his own increases. He comes to consider those about him as efficient machines; he uses them, lays them aside, picks them up again and will only be guided by his own intuitions. In the end he finds himself surrounded by men whose value he has destroyed by refusing them more responsibility. The day comes when he is obliged to let them act for themselves. They fall and, although not seeking to betray him, they do so.

My brother was the one man the Emperor should have left in France. The reasons I have just outlined and the intrigues which exaggerated Eugène's popularity made him refrain from doing so. He placed the High Chancellor at the head of affairs and left for Russia.[3] The Empress accompanied him as far as Dresden where he met the rulers of Austria and Prussia. I watched my brother leave, I saw the other two men I cared for depart and I felt very badly. We feared even victories since they would unavoidably bring sorrow to a few more families and we desired only that happiness which is to be found in peace.

The attention which the youth of my children forced me to bestow on them was my only refuge from these gloomy thoughts. I always had to have them with me and I took them with me to the springs at Aix-la-Chapelle. My oldest son had scarlet fever there.[4] Besides my other fatigues nursing him day and night prevented the waters doing me very much good. Those at Spa proved more efficacious. My mother had gone to Milan to be with my sister-in-law, who gave birth to a daughter.[5]

The Queen of Naples ruled over her dominions in the

absence of the King, who was with the Emperor. The other princesses were at different health resorts. I was obliged to return to be with the Empress Marie Louise, who people considered was being left too much alone. She came to see me sometimes at Saint-Leu and liked it very much there. She frequently received news from the Emperor and generally passed it on to me. Her affection and her anxiety about him seemed to me sincere, and I appreciated her sharing our uneasiness.

The life of all of us women was really a pitiful one. All France seemed to be in Russia. Our desires, our fears, our prayers—all were directed there.

The nation had never been so widely separated from its defenders. The distance at which war was being waged increased its terrors. There were many complaints against the man who had carried it so far afield. He should have forgiven them. Sorrow is a bad counselor by which to judge of vast projects. As yet it only began to make itself heard, but the situation grew more serious the day when Fortune, weary of being always on our side, seemed suddenly to desert us, chose to set at naught both our skill and our courage and even raised the elemental forces of nature to combat our armies. How completely our grandeur was overthrown! How our pride was humbled! On that day the Northern Empire, which had apparently retreated in confusion, turned on us. Only a few broken, scattered fragments of France's great host came back—broken men, but heroes all.

Our distress, our grief was as overwhelming as the disaster that had caused it. Everything was swathed in mourning. Equally dismayed and surprised at having met with defeat the French nation, which so long had allowed itself blindly to obey one man's commands, now arose and seemed ready to play a part in shaping its own destiny.

As for that man, whose heart was broken, but whose genius was necessary to limit and combat the effects of

the general disaster, he arrived in Paris almost as soon as the news of what had happened. His sudden appearance, his firm attitude kept people in order. No more criticism was heard. Our humiliation was too great to express itself in complaints, and national pride forbade counting the cost of new sacrifices.

As soon as I heard of the Emperor's return I went to the Tuileries. He seemed to me wearied, worried, but not disheartened. I had often seen him lose his temper about some trifle such as a door opened when it should have been shut or vice versa, a room too brightly or too dimly lighted. But in times of difficulty or misfortune he was completely master of his nerves.

I inquired anxiously whether the disasters which had befallen the army had been as serious as his reports had stated. He replied with a tone of repressed emotion, "I told the entire truth."

"But," I exclaimed, "we were not the only ones to suffer. Our enemies must also have suffered very severe losses."

"That is certainly true," he answered, "but it does not console me."

I asked for news of my brother, and he replied in rather a distant manner. I easily guessed the reason for this attitude.

During the campaign the Duc de Rovigo had lacked details of what was going on at the front. Paris was becoming uneasy. He heard that my brother's secretary had sent word to his family by a dispatch bearer who had just arrived from Russia, and he wished to know what news those letters contained. He hastened to make inquiries. The letter that was shown him contained much praise of my brother's conduct. It mentioned among other things that his army corps had been the only one that offered any resistance at Maloyaroslavets, where it had met with considerable success.[6] The Emperor had warmly praised the attitude of these troops. The Duc de

Rovigo gave orders to have an account of this action printed in full in the newspapers in order to reassure the Parisians. My mother, in reading how gallantly her son had behaved, had been much pleased, but I could not understand why the article did not appear in the official account of the battle, especially as the following day [7] the Bulletin described the advantages won by my brother's army corps without mentioning his name. The Duc de Rovigo was likewise struck by this difference between the two accounts of the same battle. Fearing that he would be accused of having himself been the author of these flattering remarks, he wrote the Emperor that it was my brother's secretary who was responsible for their appearing in print. I heard from Monsieur de Lavallette that the Emperor was extremely vexed at what he considered a little trick on our part. Indeed, he was so annoyed that some time later, speaking of it to Marshal Marmont, he said: "I gave everyone his just deserts in the way of praise, in spite of the compliments some people had printed about themselves in the newspapers."

The Duc de Vicence, who alone had accompanied the Emperor from Vilna to Paris, came to see me the day after his arrival. I spoke to him about my brother and how worried I was to have the latter serving under the King of Naples. He gave me many details of the misfortunes which had befallen our forces and told me how greatly Eugène and Marshal Ney had distinguished themselves, especially by their presence of mind at a time when everybody was distraught. "But," he added, "I earnestly advise you to talk only about what Marshal Ney did and not mention your brother." He said nothing more on this subject.

My sister-in-law in a letter to the Emperor also expressed her anxiety because her husband was serving under the King of Naples. The Emperor speaking to me about this letter said, "These young wives, if people paid any attention to them, would ruin their husbands."

I did not doubt in view of all these incidents that the Emperor, believing some false report, distrusted the loyalty and attachment of Eugène and judged him in a way that was unworthy of both their characters, ideas which I was powerless to efface at once, although I was well aware that they would not last long. So it turned out, for when Murat suddenly abandoned the army to return to Naples and when the discouragement of the troops had reached its height the Emperor turned to Eugène. The latter by his tireless activity managed to gather together the scattered fragments of the various units and form these wounded, badly equipped and dispirited men into an army which could still hold in check both the enemies which were pursuing them and the others which rose about them on every side. Never had a general found himself in as critical and difficult a situation. Eugène devoted himself to his task without any thought of fame or honors but animated solely by a desire to do his duty. The Emperor was forced to recognize the fact that he was deeply indebted to my brother, but he never admitted it.

We were all of us anxious to obtain full details as to what had happened in Russia and we felt both sorrowful and proud on hearing these tales of disaster and heroism.

I enjoyed anecdotes about incidents proving the nobility of human nature and was deaf to those which displayed it in an unfavorable light. I never wearied of hearing about those episodes which increased my admiration for the soldiers of France. For instance, there was the case of a young man named Bourgoing who at the risk of his own life had refused to abandon his brother, who was ill, and by his persistent courage had conquered the terrible assaults both of the climate and of the enemy. Monsieur de Brack and Monsieur de Cubières had undertaken to save a poor woman and her child. Scarcely had they secured a horse and a sleigh when the horse died, and they found themselves surrounded by Cossacks

and obliged to continue to defend themselves in spite of their exhausted condition.

My brother, thanks to his presence of mind, performed a skilful maneuver [8] and succeeded by taking advantage of the darkness in silently extricating his entire force from the hostile troops, who had completely surrounded him, thus frustrating them of their prey. Marshal Ney attempted the same feat, but he was less fortunate. He lost his way in the snow-storm. My brother when he rejoined the Emperor heard that the Marshal's troops had probably either perished or been taken prisoners. The Emperor was inconsolable. "I would have given all the wealth I possess to have avoided such a misfortune," he exclaimed. My brother and his soldiers undertook to save the situation. Although they had just escaped from those same dangers and were in the greatest need of rest, they set out. My brother led the way in the direction in which he supposed the Marshal to be. Never was there a more touching scene than that when the two armies met. Never was the sight of the imperial eagles under which they had both fought received with more enthusiasm. Rescuers and rescued were equally overjoyed.

On the mountain of Vilna, which the ice rendered impassable, it was necessary to leave the treasure-chests of the Guard behind. The silver was entrusted to the soldiers who happened to be there at the time. All brought it back intact, not a penny was missing, and yet all of them were utterly destitute and undergoing the most terrible privations.

There was also the well-known story of the little orphan girl of Vilna whose life the soldiers saved and whom they adopted and cared for as tenderly as a mother might have done. It is pleasant to recall all these instances of courage and self-sacrifice. Many others doubtless will never be known, but I am glad to be able to remind people by the few incidents just mentioned that

in our day men still know how to perform deeds of courage and abnegation, and that in the midst of our most serious misfortunes, Frenchmen have always displayed these sterling qualities.

Malet's conspiracy was one of the things which had most alarmed the Emperor during his absence and had the most to do in deciding his return to Paris. After people had recovered from the shock of Malet's rash enterprise they were much amused at the way Monsieur Pasquier, prefect of police, and the Duc de Rovigo had looked when they were dragged off to prison by men who a few hours previously had themselves been behind the bars. But the Emperor felt that those who should have protected his dynasty had shown a contemptible spirit of vacillation and lack of decision in this affair. He was greatly concerned about it. Meanwhile enormous plans were under way to make good our losses, and those who had wondered why the Emperor had returned to Paris soon learned the reason on the battle-fields of Lützen and Bautzen.

As all the officers reappeared in Paris after the vicissitudes they had undergone I had the great joy of seeing Monsieur de Flahaut again. His behavior while in active service had been warmly admired by everyone. In such times of general calamity a man shows his true colors, displays his qualities and weaknesses and proves that he is of either less or greatly more than average value. Since egoism is our strongest trait the man who sacrifices himself on behalf of others deserves to be honored. Monsieur de Flahaut's man servant, who was old and feeble, had remained behind at the attack on the mountain of Vilna. The Cossacks were close at hand. The mountain was crowded with men and slippery with ice. Monsieur de Flahaut had already crossed it once with the rest of the Emperor's staff when he heard that his servant was in danger of being left behind. He returned over the ground he had just crossed, lifted him on his shoul-

ders and with great difficulty managed to rejoin the staff and place the valet in a sleigh. Such a spirit of self-sacrifice touched my heart but did not surprise me on the part of the man who had won my affections. The Emperor had frequently sent Monsieur de Flahaut on special missions and being satisfied with the way in which he performed them appointed him his aide-de-camp. I often met him at court and therefore found it less gloomy there than it would otherwise have seemed. Is there any place which the presence of the person we love does not make more attractive?

The carnival season that year was not very animated in spite of the balls held as usual in every great capital.

My brother's position was a constant source of anxiety to my mother and myself. He had retired to Magdeburg, where he was reorganizing his troops. The entire French cavalry had been practically wiped out in the Russian campaign. My brother was obliged to place himself at the head of his staff to make even the simplest reconnaissance and he exposed himself as though he were an ordinary private. A Polish colonel named Klicki, when pursued by the Cossacks, owed his life to my brother's presence of mind, Eugène having shot down the nearest of the Colonel's pursuers just as the Cossack was about to fall upon him. It always requires tact to advise a soldier to be careful. To make Eugène give attention to what I had to say I wrote appropriate verses and sent him good advice set to music.[9]

The Emperor went to the Trianon for a few days.[10] While there he had a fall from his horse, which alarmed us greatly and obliged him to remain in bed. He sent for the Empress and me to have dinner at his bedside and said to me, "Well, well, Hortense, what a great piece of news it would have been for the English if I had been killed!"

I was surprised to hear him speak of the English. I had forgotten all about them, but they were the most

serious problem of all, and the Emperor had them constantly in mind while making his important plans.

Our losses had been so great in Russia that I was convinced they would cause the Emperor to relinquish his vast undertakings, which formed the real reason for his campaigns and to whose success so many victories had already contributed. I felt sure that he would make concessions in order to obtain a much needed peace, a peace which was as necessary to France as it was to the rest of Europe. Perhaps one more victory was still required to convince the enemy that the Russian reverses had not crushed either his force or his genius, but I thought that a peace-treaty, even though it were less brilliant than he could have made before that unfortunate campaign, would immediately follow his next military success. Naturally observant and having always been interested in trying to discover in advance what the Emperor would do, I was so sure that one more combat would put an end to the hostilities that I definitely ordered the furniture of a room which I had been wanting for a long time, after receiving news of the battle of Lützen.

Hence I was entirely sincere in the sentiments I expressed during a conversation I had with the Prince of Schwarzenberg [the Austrian Ambassador] following the return of the Emperor.

We never received the foreign ambassadors except at our large receptions and in a formal manner. The Emperor would not have allowed any intimacy with them. Consequently I was much surprised when one evening while I was at home with only my ladies in waiting in attendance, my *valet-de-chambre* announced the Prince of Schwarzenberg and Comte de Bubna. De Bubna had just arrived from Vienna, having received a post at the French court. Our servants had by accident allowed the visitors to come upstairs, and they were waiting for me in my drawing-room. I could not refuse to see them and greeted them as though I was not aware

of the unexpected nature of their visit. I quickly noticed that they had something important to say to me privately. After a few banal remarks the Prince approached me and said in a low voice: "Madame, you who are so familiar with the Emperor's character, do you really think we can expect him to make peace? We wish he would do so. Europe is weary. But the Emperor, if he wins a victory, will he not seek to regain all his former advantages?"

I replied that I was convinced that the Emperor must score a success in order to restore the confidence of his troops and wipe out the memory of our recent disasters, and I added that I felt sure the Emperor also realized how greatly all of Europe needed rest; he was as wise an administrator as he was a great general; to assure the happiness of his subjects was a task worthy of his genius and one which he never neglected; up to now his strength had always lain in the fact that he gave France what she wanted and if she demanded peace at the present time he would not stand in the way.

"Have you not enough influence with him to make him realize that peace is necessary?" asked the Prince.

"He obeys only the commands of public opinion which become his own wishes," I replied. "Then, too, my youth and my position as an obedient daughter have always prevented my offering him any advice."

"In that case perhaps Prince Eugène, who rules a great country, who knows what his subjects wish, will speak firmly to the Emperor and tell him the entire truth."

"My brother more than anyone else realizes how necessary peace has become. I shall write to him. He will bring up the subject, you may be sure of that, but, I repeat, the Emperor is too wise to need any advice. One more military victory and he will devote himself to insuring the prosperity of his subjects."

Monsieur de Bubna repeated about the same things to me as the Prince of Schwarzenberg. I replied to him in these same terms and when they took their leave I was

firmly convinced that peace was in the hands of Emperor Napoleon and that he would agree to it.

He did indeed intend to do so after having won several battles, but he was doubtless reluctant to make too important sacrifices. Perhaps, too, the enemy's conditions grew more harsh as our forces grew weaker and theirs consequently became stronger.[11]

Monsieur de Flahaut, the Emperor's aide-de-camp, was sent to the Viceroy bearing special messages. He came to see me before he left to inquire if I had any letters to send my brother and told me the Emperor wished to have me mention when I wrote Eugène how pleased[12] he was at the way in which my brother had behaved.

Eugène concentrated his troops, those of the Emperor advanced and joined them at Lützen, where the famous combat took place which so nobly retrieved our former defeats. At the spot where Gustavus Adolphus had been killed and near where a monument has been erected to him Eugène met the Emperor. It was here the latter dismounted and embraced him.

My brother felt that he had achieved all his desires in thus having taken part in a battle toward whose success his troops had largely contributed and in having received the expression of everyone's admiration.

Before leaving for the front[13] the Emperor had appointed the Empress to the post of Regent with a council of advisors. We were all present when she took the oath of office.

I went to take the waters at Aix-les-Bains. As a result of the constant anxiety we were in regarding the safety of those whom we loved my health grew steadily worse and demanded care. After all I had gone through I was only able to keep alive, thanks to those healing waters, which every summer helped me to recover a little of my strength, and thus be ready to face new trials.

I heard of the death of General Duroc and the news

affected me deeply. I had admired his firm, loyal character and his frank outspokenness even though it at times made him seem positively rude. He was a slave to his duties and scrupulously honest. Completely loyal to the interests of his master, he never hesitated to express his personal opinions and he knew so well the intentions of the Emperor that he was frequently able to decide just how far certain orders were to be carried out. He even ventured at times to delay their execution when he felt that they were due to a sudden fit of temper. A king would be more loved if he only had servants like Duroc. Such courtiers deserve to be called friends. The Emperor knew this and did everything he could to render the General's last moments less painful and he sincerely regretted his death. The General's wife besides possessing the sterling qualities of her husband was also very charming. Her common sense and healthy point of view made her a notable member of the group of young court ladies who enjoyed a well-deserved and favorable reputation. Her friendship and confidence toward me allowed me to judge her merits as they deserved.

But the one who by her graces and her gifts was the most exquisite of them all was soon to disappear, and her loss was to be one of the cruelest blows unkind Fate ever dealt me.

Since her husband's death and my return from Holland Adèle had remained constantly with me. She devoted herself to her duties as friend and comforter. All her time was given up to the delicate attentions she lavished on me, her efforts to encourage my drooping spirits, and the numberless charitable acts she performed on behalf of all sorts of unfortunate people. Often I have seen her take off a brilliant court dress and abandon pleasures that would have seemed to many to be altogether absorbing in order to take alms to beggars living in the most miserable hovels. She had accompanied me to Aix. Together we went to look at a waterfall. I crossed the stream first on

an unsteady plank. As I turned what a tragic spectacle met my eyes! Great God, could it be true! My friend, swept away by the current, vanished beneath my very eyes. I succeeded only later in recovering her inanimate body. The officers of my household, my servants attempted to drag me away from the scene where the tragedy had taken place. I would not leave. In spite of everything, I would not give up all hope. Yet I knew it was fruitless. She had departed. What anguish filled my bosom! I found myself suddenly more utterly alone than ever, now that I had been robbed of that friend who helped me to endure my sufferings. The thought of the future terrified me. No longer would I have her mind to support my fainting spirit, no more would I have her gentle nature to calm the tempestuous emotions of my own character. I accused Providence of treating me unjustly and I accused myself of having insisted too constantly on my own troubles to this incomparable friend, and having never made it clear enough to her how dear she was to me. I felt that in the past I had indeed been selfish since then, at least, she had been by my side.

My mother when she heard what had happened wished to hurry to me. She guessed the extent of my sorrow and sent her chamberlain, Comte de Turpin, to inquire as to my health. The Empress Marie Louise also wrote me a letter, sympathizing with me in my misfortune. Everyone shared my sorrow because everyone loved the person whose loss made me so unhappy. But for me what consolation was there?

I founded a hospital at Aix with Sisters of Charity to attend to the sick people. I had the body of my unhappy friend laid at rest in a chapel at Saint-Leu. Thus I kept her near me. I could not heal the pain this dreadful loss had caused me, but I sought to assuage it by acts of charity. I felt that I was helping her by imitating her example.

On my return to Saint-Leu my mother brought me my

children. Her affectionate care touched me but could not console me.

I went to Paris to see Adèle's father and her sisters, Madame Gamot and the Maréchale Ney. Our interview was a heartrending one. Madame Campan also was inconsolable. She felt that in losing this pupil whom she had brought up and of whom she was so proud she had lost a daughter. Yet after all it was I who had suffered the most grievous loss.

Sea-baths were prescribed me for my health. I went to Dieppe with my children from whom I could no longer bear to be separated. They were all I still cared for in life or, at least, the only beings who still needed me.

King Joseph, having been obliged to abandon his Spanish kingdom, had retired to his country estate at Mortefontaine. I made him a visit there. The Queen shared his retirement. She was admirable in her gentleness, kindness of heart and self-abnegation. She shared my indifference to rank and position and like me had found they failed to bring her happiness. Her husband, whose character was totally unlike that of Louis, made her unhappy but from quite different reasons. Without any respect for her and solely interested in other women he neglected her and even was frequently rude to her. Her domestic sorrows reminded me of what I had endured so long.

The sight of this unhappy woman living as though she were in a prison recalled me to myself. I remembered the advice of my friend when she reproached me for not appreciating more fully the pleasures that I still possessed. I felt that I had been punished for this attitude and I turned toward my children, those dearly loved beings who needed my care and my energy. "At least," I said, "I shall bring them up as I think best. I am free to spend my time as I see fit; I am able to weep undisturbed. Although life may not be pure joy at least it is no longer altogether painful. May Providence spare me

and not punish me because I demanded too much and because I remembered only the suffering it has inflicted on me." These thoughts and the public events which made it necessary for me to be brave helped me attain that state of resignation in which, while we do not forget our misfortunes, we yet find the strength to bear them.

While at Mortefontaine I saw the Queen of Westphalia, whose husband made her happy and who enjoyed to the full all the agreeable things life has to offer and those which rank confers on you. The loss of her kingdom was the one blow which had ever fallen on her, and as she had everything else she could desire the only thing that interested her was what went on in the fields of politics. Consequently this was all we talked about, and we all agreed as to the need for a speedy peace.

The Emperor was at Dresden. We believed he could conclude negotiations there. Perhaps it was not in his power to do so. Perhaps he depended too much on the strength of his armies, on the resources of France, on the alliance with Austria, on his own good fortune. Did he fear that if he made any concessions he should be considered weak, and that if people formed this opinion the hatred of his power, which till now had been suppressed, would burst out? Or did he feel himself defeated unless he imposed his own terms? Perhaps future generations will be able to decide where his fault lay, and whether he should have made peace when the opportunity arose, since national pride had been satisfied at Lützen and Bautzen. But England led and Austria followed. The Emperor's subjects grew restless under a too continuous military domination. Kings on their thrones forgot who had placed them there, soldiers in the field went over to the enemy, and the allies of yesterday became the enemies of today. People listened only to the voice of treason and sought to satisfy the promptings of revenge.

The army, having been obliged to retire in the face of overwhelming numbers at Leipzig, withdrew to Mayence.

On the way it had to overcome all sorts of obstacles which became constantly more numerous. The number of our enemies grew as our difficulties increased. Wherever the troops actually fought they were victorious, but the only result was that they eventually found themselves on their native soil, obliged to defend it against the invaders. Hardly had they arrived when an epidemic broke out which carried off a large number of those whom war had spared.

The Emperor returned to Saint Cloud. He seemed entirely absorbed by negotiations for peace. France desired it. Worn out by her latest efforts she seemed unwilling to undertake new ones. Her soldiers, exhausted by the setbacks they had suffered during the last two campaigns, began to wonder if this was all the reward they could hope to obtain. The buoyancy of the days when they were constantly victorious vanished, and discouragement took its place. Adherents to the republican form of government, who had been obliged to remain silent so long as the country was prosperous, now began to make themselves heard and believed that the opposition party could obtain political concessions. It was not the moment they should have sought to secure them. That might have been done when France, having attained the highest point of her military glory, could have dreamed of still further perfecting her political system. At present it was either too soon or too late. The approach of the invader should have united all parties for the defense of the country, and all powers should have been entrusted to the one man capable of doing this. But people were only conscious of how heavily this man's will had weighed in the balance of their destiny for many years. They had forgotten his gifts as a leader. This is a common enough mistake, but one which always proves fatal. What could be more harmful than this political division which placed us at the mercy of jealous and hostile forces? Our leader, notwithstanding what might be considered his faults, was

more likely to rescue us than the foreigner, in spite of all the latter's fine promises.

Thus the Emperor found himself alone in his struggle against both his personal enemies and those of France. Had he received the same support as in the past he might still have proved victorious. His brothers gathered round him. My husband, who had constantly refused to leave foreign territory, now that he saw these countries declaring war on France arrived to add his efforts to those of the rest of the family. He again stayed with his mother. I did not see him once.

When my husband had heard the decree of the foreign monarchs that France must surrender all territories beyond her natural frontiers, he believed that Holland could not fail to become again independent, and he had proposed to the Emperor to withdraw his abdication and reassume the Dutch crown. The Emperor had refused.

Since the death of Grand Marshal Duroc that post had remained unoccupied. The Emperor liked Monsieur de Flahaut and had been much pleased with his behavior on the different missions intrusted to him during the last campaign. He thought of appointing him to this post. The Duc de Rovigo, who considered that he was more or less entitled to it himself, spoke to the Emperor about Monsieur de Flahaut's affection for me, which was generally known in Paris. The Emperor wished his Grand Marshal to be someone entirely devoted to his own interests. He feared any influence that was not his own. He had intrusted Monsieur de Flahaut with a certain mission which required secrecy. The Duc de Rovigo called on me and in the course of our conversation looked at me fixedly while speaking of this mission as though I must know what he was referring to. Although little accustomed to concealing my thoughts I was obliged to make an effort and appear entirely ignorant of what he meant in order not to injure the prospects of the man who kept nothing from me. I suspected that this little stratagem

had been employed to discover how deeply Monsieur de Flahaut took me into his confidence. Finally Savary remained head of the police department and the Emperor appointed General Bertrand, who was already his aide-de-camp, grand marshal of the palace. Everyone approved of his choice, for Bertrand was a gifted man, unpretentious in his manner, kind-hearted, loyal and upright. He had married a Mademoiselle Dillon, who was related to my family. I had made the match at Saint-Leu, and my almoner the Bishop of Osmond had blessed their union. Mademoiselle Dillon was high-spirited, with lofty moral standards and nobility of heart. Very demonstrative in all her feelings, she was particularly so as regarded her violent affection for her husband. The happiness of their marriage was a proof of the fact that contrasting characters are not an obstacle to domestic joy.

In the meanwhile nothing more was heard about an approaching peace, which was what everyone was hoping for. France was uneasy, the political parties were becoming active again. In order to compel them all to share his views the Emperor in the past had used violence. When arguments did not succeed he used force. And force succeeded. The young men belonging to the former nobility who were obliged to enlist against the wishes of their parents became our partisans from the moment they shared the glory of the new régime. In the present instance, however, neglecting the older members of that nobility, which he neither needed nor feared, the Emperor called to the colors all the youths belonging to the richest and most influential families of France. His orders for this enforced draft were already severe. Unfortunately the manner in which they were executed was even harsher and more inconsiderate. The result was the arousing of bitter animosities.

Victories would have saved everything, defeats envenomed all public complaints. The benefits of the lawgiver, the exploits of the general were speedily forgotten.

People only remembered the acts of a man ever anxious to conquer more territory. Even we, the members of his own family, who were used to letting him dictate to us in everything, now dared to protest and blame him openly for continuing a war which perhaps he lacked the power of bringing to an end.

The Prince of Benevento [Monsieur de Talleyrand], who for a long time had felt himself to be in disgrace, recognized the weakness of the Emperor's position and sought to take advantage of it. He had at his disposal the means of doing much harm and he employed them all. A man who hates another but lacks courage to combat him openly rarely lets slip an opportunity for which he has long been secretly waiting.

Meanwhile the crusade of the northern races, allied one to another, at last set foot on the soil of France, which had so long remained inviolate. A panic such as never occurred before seized the capital. The enemy actually in France. Where is our army? What forces can we oppose to such a formidable invasion? As a matter of fact no steps had been taken to defend the city.

I had gone to attend mass at the Tuileries. The Duchesse de Montebello, apparently much alarmed, spoke to me, saying: "Madame, have you heard the news? The allied armies have crossed the Rhine. Paris is panic-stricken. What can the Emperor be doing?"

The Empress, whom the Duchess had informed of what was happening, appeared to be much upset. "I seem to attract misfortune wherever I go," she said to me. "All those who have had anything to do with me, either intimately or at a distance, have suffered from this more or less. Since my childhood I have constantly been obliged to escape hurriedly from where I happened to be."

I returned in the evening to the family dinner party. The Emperor was alone with the Empress when I arrived. He was holding her in his arms and seemed to be

teasing her. "Ah, there you are, Hortense," he exclaimed laughingly as I entered. "Are people as frightened as all that in Paris? Do you already see the Cossacks riding down the street? Well, they are not here yet, and we have not forgotten our trade as soldiers. Don't worry," he added, speaking to his wife. "We will go again to Vienna and beat Papa Francis."

At dinner his son came in at dessert time. He repeated several times to the little boy, "Come on and beat Papa Francis." And the child repeated this phrase so frequently and so clearly that the Emperor seemed delighted and laughed heartily.

After dinner he sent for the Prince of Neuchâtel, "Now then, Berthier, go over there," he said, pointing to his table covered with green cloth. "We shall have to begin once more our campaign of Italy."

The Emperor dictated steadily for an hour as we sat there, speaking without any notes and outlining the way the army was to be organized which was to assemble on the plains of Châlons. He sent for the four generals in command of the Guard and inquired how many men were on sick-leave, how many were available for active service. He paid particular attention to the reorganizing of this part of his forces. All this took time. Finally he dismissed everyone and turning to us he said: "Well, ladies, are you satisfied now? Do you think it is going to be as easy to catch us as all that?"

As the national finances were in difficulties at that moment the Emperor took the funds required for this new campaign from his private fortune. The method in which his household accounts were kept was so perfect that it might have served as model to all the departments of the state.

The Emperor was extremely thrifty in his personal expenses, very liberal where others were concerned. He frequently quoted the example of Charlemagne, who sold even the herbs from his private garden, and the Emperor

PRINCE EUGENE
A Miniature from the Collection
of Prince Napoleon

dismissed his chamberlain Monsieur de Rémusat from the post of controller of his wardrobe because the chamberlain had spent over 80,000 francs in a year on it. One day the Emperor spoke to us about this and said: "Can you imagine such a sum being spent on me who only wear an officer's undress uniform? That was why I told Monsieur de Turenne to look after my wardrobe expenses. I limited them to 24,000 francs per year and I do not intend to exceed this sum." As he was extremely particular about his linen and as he lost a great deal of it while at the front, Monsieur de Turenne was forced to resort to all sorts of expedients to keep within this figure. He even had pages run after the Emperor's gloves if he happened to forget them in his carriages.[14] It was by practicing such personal economy that the Emperor was able to come to the rescue of his public treasury. He frequently made gifts of two or three hundred thousand francs to his marshals and generals in order to enable them to pay their debts, or buy an estate or town house. Before I left for Holland he attended a ball I gave at my house. "You are not as elegant as the other princesses. Does not your husband make you a big enough allowance? Well, then, I shall set aside a hundred thousand francs a year for you from my personal budget." Nevertheless it may be mentioned that he kept his gifts within reasonable limits.

The Emperor's departure took place shortly[15] after the scene I have just related. One morning all the officers of the National Guard were summoned to the *Salle des Maréchaux*. The Emperor had the King of Rome brought in, took him in his arms, and with the Empress beside him, and surrounded by the rest of his family, announced that he was leaving for the front and declared his confidence in the National Guard of Paris to whom he intrusted the defense of the capital and the protection of those who were dearest to him.

The enthusiasm which greeted him was quite sincere,

the more so as the position was a critical one and the interests of the individuals and the state both seemed to be entirely dependent on his military genius. I saw men's eyes filled with tears, and a few days later the same men not only abandoned the imperial cause but insulted the Emperor in the most outrageous manner.

That evening I was alone with the Emperor and the Empress. She kept crying all the time, and the Emperor kissed her repeatedly in order to console her. He had us go into his study. While we were there warming ourselves by the fire he sorted out his papers, burning a large number of letters. Every time he came near the chimney he embraced his wife saying, "Do not be gloomy. Trust me. Do you think I have forgotten my profession entirely?" And he added while he held his wife tightly in his arms, "I will beat Papa Francis again. Don't cry; I will be home soon."

The hostile armies advanced slowly and cautiously. A conference held at Châtillon gave us some hope of a general peace-treaty being signed. I was under the impression, as a result of the calculations the Emperor had made in our presence, that the entire force with which he was about to confront the united armies of all Europe did not amount to more than fifty or sixty thousand men. I trembled when I thought of this small number of troops, but his genius sufficed to even the balance.

Never did he display greater skill and greater energy. He seemed to be everywhere at once. No sooner had he defeated the enemy at one point than he would be heard of seventy-five miles away, again repulsing their advance, and his army like its chief seemed to possess the gift of multiplying itself indefinitely. It was as though the defenders of the soil of France drew new strength from the ground over which they fought. Thus it came about that at the head of a handful of heroes the Emperor was able to hold in check the hosts of the Coalition, and but for treachery he would perhaps have defeated them.

The King of Naples dared to forget all he owed the Emperor and was sufficiently mad to think he could survive the fall of his natural protector. His wife shared his mistaken opinion. Ambition makes men blind, and a just appreciation of one's own abilities is the best guide at all times, one which prevents a person from making mistakes.

My brother, whom the Emperor had sent from Dresden to reorganize an army in Italy, defended himself vigorously. The allied monarchs offered him the same terms [16] as were offered Murat. They promised that he should be allowed to keep the Italian crown if he would abandon the cause of France. There could be no doubt what his answer would be. He refused, and informed the Emperor of what had occurred. The Emperor in return ordered him to send his wife, who was about to have another child, and his children to France. This suspicious attitude, which was, to be sure, readily understandable from a man who had just been betrayed by a member of his own family [Caroline] nevertheless annoyed my brother. Even the slightest hint of a lack of confidence offends a man who is both loyal and sensitive. Eugène's wife refused flatly to obey the imperial orders and hastened to shut herself up in the fortress of Mantua, where she prepared to have her confinement surrounded by the horrors of war, but at least not far from her husband. Eugène won several battles, and had it not been for the Neapolitan army he would have succeeded in creating a diversion of the main attacks that were being prepared against us, and thus, perhaps, have greatly aided the Emperor's efforts.

The French nation was in a state of great perplexity. The number of her enemies increased each day. The two sections of the legislative body, which till then had adopted a silent and obedient attitude, began to complain vehemently. They even wished to oppose the decisions of an executive who, in the course of time, had assumed

absolute power. To bring up such discussions at a time like this was to inform the enemy of our internal dissensions and place in his hands the means for accomplishing our defeat.

Before leaving Paris the Emperor dissolved the Chamber and the Senate as they appeared to be about to interfere with his plans for national defense. People talked of despotism, the magic name of Liberty was invoked by his adversaries. From then on, everyone who opposed the Emperor adopted the title of "Liberal." Even his generals and his marshals, tired out and discouraged, added their complaints to those of the general public. It was as though they felt their republicanism, which had so long lain dormant beneath the laurels they had won, suddenly revive. They declared themselves hostile to the Emperor's ambitious plans, forgetting that they had previously been his most devoted collaborators and the first to benefit by his ambitions. The Emperor shared their desire for peace, but he wished it established on honorable terms. In order to obtain them new victories were necessary. Every man has the weakness which corresponds to his natural gifts. While the Emperor was full of energy, bold in his plans and possessed a tenacity of purpose which frequently enabled him to conquer all obstacles and carry off the palm of victory, he nevertheless did not know sufficiently how to adapt his character to changing conditions. That very inflexibility of will, which had so long been one of his qualities, now became a source of danger to him. Yet it has been said he managed to conquer his aversion to peace until he saw that it would be based on trickery and deceit.

Had peace been definitely signed at Châtillon we should have seen the Emperor as popular as ever when he returned to Paris, so eagerly did the Parisians desire his presence. But he had always been inclined to rely too much on his own military genius and the valor of the French nation. The astounding success at Mont-

mirail had caused his hopes to revive, and he doubtless thought he could eventually obtain still better terms for France, since he always placed his country's interests before his personal ones.

A short time before, wishing to unite all his forces, he had instructed the minister of war to write to my brother to abandon Italy in order to concentrate his troops in France. Impatient of all delays, he sent my mother a letter asking her to mention the urgency of his request to her son. "France first," he wrote my mother. "She needs to gather all her children about her." As soon as my brother heard what the Emperor wished, he sent his aide-de-camp Tascher to report the situation in which he found himself. He had just gained a victory [17] over the Austrians and scored several successes against the Neapolitans which enabled him to hold the foe in check there, while conserving the line at Mantua. If he abandoned his position he was in danger of seeing his forces diminish as he advanced toward France, and he was convinced that he would only succeed in bringing a handful of troops across the frontier, while at the same time the enemy would penetrate France from the direction of Italy. Monsieur Tascher met the Emperor on the battlefield of Montmirail and stated his case.

"Return immediately," replied the Emperor. "Tell Eugène what you have seen here and tell him to hold on, to hold tight to Italy." This victory was the last one the Emperor won.

He persisted, however, in his efforts to keep France from succumbing to its enemies. Only the army shared this heroic obstinacy. His soldiers did not attempt to understand what was going on; they remained faithful to their cause, to the oaths they had sworn, as though they had only one idea, one hope in life—that of defending and saving their country. But fortune was against us.

Paris had been hastily fortified. All these warlike preparations had terrified the townspeople but could not

destroy the natural gaiety of the French. Other nations are serious and solemn. Misfortune does not come to them as a sudden shock. They foresee that it may occur and their foresight gives them the courage to resist it. The Frenchman finds his strength in his native gaiety. At a time when his capital was threatened, when everyone's fortune was in danger, he still managed to jest. People packed up and concealed their precious belongings as merrily as though they were going on a picnic. The theaters remained open till the very last minute.

The morale of the National Guard was excellent. All the Parisians had enlisted as danger drew near and were filled with a desire to defend their homes. Only a leader was lacking. The Emperor could not manage to be everywhere at once. He was outflanking the enemy in such a way as to drive the latter toward Paris. He had inquired whether the city could hold out a couple of days. Although the answer had been in the negative he nevertheless continued to carry out his strategic plans. But while he did so the State, deprived of the only man who could have guided its course, drifted along, the prey of any sudden accident. The habit of too strict obedience to a superior deprives the subordinate of self-confidence and initiative. He hesitates to adopt any line of action. And action even though it leads nowhere is better than remaining motionless; it shows at least an instinct for self-preservation.

The Emperor's brothers met privately. The Empress was about to assume the position of Regent, and I, as always, found myself in the position of being an alien to the rest of the family. My drawing-room had become a workroom and we spent our time making lint for the hospitals. These melancholy occupations had something consoling about them. Those we loved were not struggling among icy wastes. At present they were near at hand, almost in sight, in fact; and a sister, a wife, a mother could hasten to the bedside of someone who had

been wounded. This feeling that we were sharing their danger, that we were no longer entirely alone inspired us with the energy circumstances required and overcame that impression of being a useless burden which generally weakens a woman's courage.

On March 28, 1814, my head chambermaid entered my room early in the morning. Greatly excited, she announced that the enemy was not far from Paris and that wounded French soldiers were arriving at the city gates. Although not fully informed as to what was taking place I found it hard to believe that the Allies were so close at hand when none of my relatives had said a word to me about it. I had spent the preceding evening with the Empress, who had not appeared to know more than I did myself. I had played a game of whist with Monsieur de Talleyrand and Monsieur Molé. We had joked about the rumors that the enemy was on the point of capturing Paris without having taken these tales at all seriously.

For the last month I had been going riding every day for my health. I went out as usual and passing along the outer boulevards I quickly became aware that what my chambermaid had said was true. Many wounded soldiers, who were being sent to Versailles instead of to their usual quarters, assured me the enemy was not far away. This picture of war close to me, right under my eyes, made a deep impression on me. I returned home deeply moved and conscious that the moment when everyone would need all his courage was at hand.

In the evening I went, quite early, to see the Empress. She was about to go to the cabinet meeting, where, so I was told, the question of her departure was to be discussed. I tried by a thousand arguments to persuade her not to think of leaving Paris. I told her that if she left she would be quite as certain to fall into the enemy's hands as if he captured the city, whereas her presence in the capital would encourage its defenders; that we must all try to be worthy of the rank we held and fulfil all our

obligations to the public; that, even if we were to suffer, we must accept that suffering, but that above all she had certain duties to perform; that only in Paris would she be safe from any danger to her person while her presence would stimulate and arouse everyone's courage and loyalty.

I was still talking to her when King Joseph entered the room. I kept on arguing, but although he listened he did not say a word, probably because in the days of the Empire people considered all women's ideas regarding political matters as silly and worthless.

I remained alone in the drawing-room, waiting to find out what the cabinet meeting had decided. It was necessary for me to know at once in order to be able to send word to my mother, who, alone in her retreat at Malmaison, had no idea of what was taking place and whom everyone seemed to have forgotten.

The Duchesse de Montebello came to keep me company. I knew the influence she possessed with the Empress and I explained more in detail than I had been able to do before how essential it was that the Empress remain in Paris. I added that the Emperor was doubtless aware of our position and that he was too skilful a strategist not to know how to come to our rescue. I also pointed out that the idea of the capitulation of Paris was due to a panic-stricken state of mind since on the contrary everything should be done to save the city if we were not to run the risk of utter disaster.

The Empress, who on her return from the cabinet meeting was accompanied by King Joseph and the High Chancellor, said to me half jestingly, half timidly: "I am leaving and I advise you to do the same. The Minister of War assures me that it is impossible to defend Paris."

I was dumfounded. All I was able to answer was: "At least, my sister, remember you are losing your crown. I am glad to see that you are prepared to sacrifice it with a smile."

She came close to me and said in a low voice: "Perhaps you are right, but that is the decision that has just been made, and if the Emperor finds fault with anybody it is not I who deserve the blame."

It was agreed that she was to leave that very night. The High Chancellor protested against such haste. He declared no arrangements had been made, no orders had been given, and that the Empress scarcely had time to pack up a few pieces of wearing apparel. As far as he was concerned it was quite impossible to be ready in time.

The time of the departure was put off till the following morning. Even the State funds came near being overlooked, but it was decided to send them off with the Empress's party in order to avoid having to form two escorts.

I approached King Joseph and inquired if anything had been said about what was to become of us. He replied that in such delicate circumstances it behooved everyone to decide for himself what had best be done and that he had no advice to give me.

I went home sick at heart at the spectacle of such a lack of courage and on catching sight of Monsieur de Lavallette I exclaimed: "Only women know how to rise to the occasion, and when the fate of nations depends on men such as I have just seen one cannot be surprised if everything goes wrong, and if the most worthy causes are lost."

Then, adding to the actual seriousness of the situation a little spitefulness provoked by the ridiculous scene I had just witnessed, I described the High Chancellor's alarm, his absolute lack of energy at the moment when it was most necessary, and the unfortunate results of a policy which resulted in the Empress and her son driving away in broad daylight [18] without troops, without anyone capable of giving an order and without any sort of guide, an action which resulted in their being captured two days later.

Since I was left free to do as I pleased, I was strongly tempted to take a chance and stay on in Paris. I went to bed putting off till the morrow the task of taking such an important decision. From the Tuileries I had dispatched a mounted messenger to Malmaison to inform the Empress of what had taken place and urge her to leave immediately for the Château of Navarre.

I had just fallen asleep when a message arrived from my husband, telling me the decision the Empress had taken. I replied that I already knew of it, and tried again to go to sleep. A moment later he wrote another message suggesting that I accompany the Empress. I again replied that there was time enough left to make up my mind early the next morning. I thought at last I was going to get a little rest, when for the third time he sent me word ordering me to leave Paris. Such a restless night in addition to my delicate health was not calculated to prepare me for the difficulties and dangers that lay ahead. Nevertheless I got up and prepared to obey his wishes. This was the more easily done as it had been for a long time a habit of mine to be ready for whatever might happen. I needed only a very few minutes to make my final preparations.

The Empress had already left. I quickly felt the effect that this departure had produced. The National Guard, who previously had been prepared to defend themselves, were now completely discouraged. The crowd of townspeople who in the morning had been demanding weapons to share in the defense appeared gravely perturbed. They had hooted the carriage of Madame Mère when she drove off and, having witnessed all those departures in broad daylight, had become indignant at this family that seemed to be abandoning them in the hour of adversity.

One curious incident had occurred. The little King of Rome, who went out for a walk every morning, that particular day, acting from some whim which cannot

really be called a premonition, had refused obstinately to leave his apartment. He caught hold of all the doors, crying out as he did so, "I don't want to leave my house." Force had to be used finally to drag him out and he sobbed violently.

I have since heard that Monsieur de Talleyrand as he led the Duchesse de Montebello to the Empress's carriage and helped her step in, pressed her hand and said, "Ah, my poor Duchess, how they are fooling you!"

I was most uncertain what to do. There was no one near who could advise me or even organize my escape if I decided to make one. The officers attached to my household were not soldiers and I was liable to be confronted with all the problems of a retreat.

Monsieur de La Bédoyère was announced. He had been wounded at Bautzen at the head of the regiment which he commanded and since then had been in Paris convalescing. I had not seen him since his marriage. Hearing of our sudden departures and remembering that he formerly served as my brother's aide-de-camp, he called to place himself at my disposal. His advice would have been useful to me, but I declined his offer although expressing my appreciation of it, for his devotion touched me, particularly as his family were so hostile to the Empire and as he had lately married a wife whose personal sympathies allied her very closely with the former dynasty.

A peasant brought the Duchesse de Bassano a line from her husband, who was with the Emperor, saying, "We shall soon be with you." She and several other ladies attached to the court came to see me. All were greatly pained by the Empress's departure, which paralyzed all defensive measures. They shared my opinion that if Paris had resisted twenty-four hours the Emperor would have arrived and saved his capital. But in spite of our conviction what could helpless and inexperienced women hope to accomplish?

Meanwhile the National Guard sent to inquire whether it was true that I too was leaving. Comte Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angély, who commanded a portion of these troops, was the delegate who called on me. I answered that if they were prepared to defend me I would stay with my children. As a matter of fact my horses were returned to the stable, and I was prepared to run all the risks that Paris might be exposed to.

My husband, when he heard that I had not left in spite of his reiterated orders, had declined to accompany the Empress although he had been appointed to do so. He was waiting for me to get into the carriage to follow my example as his health would not allow him to ride. That was the reason he had been appointed to accompany the Empress. King Joseph and King Jerome remained behind to defend the city. My husband, hearing my new decision not to leave, sent me word that although in his opinion it was a mistake to abandon the national capital the Minister of War declared it would be impossible to defend it. He added that if I persisted in remaining behind he would come to claim his children and take them away with him, for I did not understand the risk I was running and if my children were taken as hostages I should be responsible for anything that might happen to them. These arguments were too convincing for me to continue to hesitate. On the other hand, I had made a promise to stay and I did not wish to break my word. Furthermore I was convinced that the Emperor would shortly come to our rescue, and with a little courage it would be possible for Paris to defend itself for forty-eight hours. Therefore I did not leave in spite of all the efforts that were made to have me do so.

Toward nightfall Comte Regnaud de Saint-Jean-d'Angély, greatly excited, came and asked me on behalf of the National Guard itself not to stay in the city. He added that the enemy had already seized the heights, that the city would doubtless be bombarded and stormed the

following morning; anything was liable to take place, and not only was I to consider myself freed from my promise, but his troops would prefer to know that I and my children were out of danger. I finally yielded, recognizing the fact at last that no one was equal to the occasion, that all had lost their heads and one could only trust in Providence and accept its decrees.

My personal relations with my husband were not the least of my worries. After all my years of domestic misery nothing alarmed me more than the thought of again being with him and being dependent on him. The idea of becoming a prisoner in the hands of strangers seemed hardly less intolerable to me than that of having to affect a reconciliation with the man who had so embittered my existence. It seemed as if he had waited for this moment to regain possession of his prey. At least that was the thought which occurred to me, for he should have accompanied the Empress and under some pretext or other he had avoided doing so. He had ordered his horses unharnessed and would not go away without me. One of his man servants remained on my doorstep and was to warn him the instant I prepared to leave. He seemed to attach the greatest importance to the fact of my not remaining in Paris. His uneasiness in regard to the fate of his children made this anxiety seem natural enough. Tormented by all these worries I stepped into my carriage at eight o'clock in the evening.[19] Already, several hours before, I had received word that Cossacks had been seen on the Plaine des Vertus.[20] I had accepted the offer of a lady to spend the night at her château near Versailles. As soon as we had passed the gate of the city I gave orders for my groom to ride a hundred paces ahead of the carriage, and if he caught sight of any Cossacks to fire a shot in the air as a signal that the carriages were to turn back.

I arrived without any trouble at Glatigny, worn out by so many varied emotions. I was undecided whether to

proceed on to Rambouillet and rejoin the Empress Marie Louise or go to my mother at Navarre where she doubtless had arrived. In such troublous times irresolution is one of our chief ills. Mine sprang especially from my continual fear of encountering my husband and being obliged to go back to him. On the other hand, it is true that these domestic worries were so acute that they distracted my mind from my misfortunes, the loss of my rank and so on, or rather allowed me to face these other problems calmly.

It was late when we arrived at Glatigny. I had my children put to bed immediately and threw myself down on a couch. Hardly had I secured a little rest when day began to break and I heard the sound of cannon and even musketry from Paris. "The cannon thunders, claiming its victims." I had never before heard it except in connection with public rejoicing. The frightful idea that death was overtaking my fellow countrymen so near at hand, instead of hastening my flight, made me desire to linger and at least learn what fate had overtaken this city which had been my cradle, and all of whose inhabitants seemed suddenly dear to me.

I felt, however, that my rank would not allow me to remain in a private house and I went on to the Petit Trianon. I sent for General Préval, who commanded the cavalry depots at Versailles, and informed him of any intention of remaining there while waiting further events. At the same time I asked him to let me know the moment there was any danger. I was well aware of the fact that it was possible for the Cossacks to arrive at the Trianon by way of the Malmaison and Bougival road, but I trusted him to protect me.

I ordered my servants not to leave the premises and I walked about the gardens hearing the sound of firing, which filled me with anxiety. Soon, however, I was reassured, as the noise stopped. Then I had at least some grounds to believe that fighting was no longer going on.

After a considerable time had elapsed I caught sight of a soldier of one of the *chasseur* regiments approaching on foot. He asked to speak to me privately to deliver a message from the General. His calm attitude, the fact that he was on foot and seemed in no way disturbed made me feel that his news could not be in the least alarming. Nevertheless, the General had sent him to me to say that there was not a moment to be lost, that the depot troops were leaving Versailles, the princes and marshals had already passed through the town, and within a few hours the city would be occupied by the enemy.

I sent for my attendants, some of whom in spite of my orders had gone into Versailles. I attempted to reassure those who had remained with me as well as I could, and at last set out on the road to Rambouillet. I found it congested by carriages, soldiers, wounded, and peasant refugees. What was to become of me? Which way was I to turn?

On the one hand I was liable to fall again into the clutches of my husband, on the other there was my mother, who seemed entirely abandoned by everyone and who might be waiting for my arrival. Finally there was the thought that my fate was wound up with that of a family whose head had been a father to me. Could I desert them in their distress? This last argument proved the strongest of all and I determined to rejoin Empress Marie Louise.

I was turning over these thoughts in my mind while my children with the unconcern of their age played about in the carriage and enjoyed themselves beside me as if our flight were nothing more than a game and as if at that moment their entire future were not being destroyed.

I arrived very late at Rambouillet, at the moment when the princes and cabinet ministers, having rested their horses, were setting out for Chartres. They were greatly surprised to see me. My first act was to inquire what had happened in Paris. King Joseph seemed inclined

to conceal the fact that the city had capitulated, but King Jerome gave me all the details and even showed me the proclamation, said to have been written by the Prince of Schwarzenberg, which invited the Parisians to follow the example of the inhabitants of the city of Bordeaux, who had demanded the return of the Bourbons. They advised me not to remain an hour longer at Rambouillet, for the Cossacks would doubtless enter the town that same night. I paid little attention to their advice, considering, perhaps erroneously, that they were unduly alarmed. Moreover it was out of the question to go on with horses that had just traveled twenty-five miles. I quietly sent my children to bed and was about to seek a little much needed repose myself when an orderly with a letter from my husband was announced. The latter had passed through Versailles during the night. Furious at not finding me with the Empress when he caught up with her, he commanded me in the harshest language to join him immediately. He added an official order to this effect signed by the Secretary of State and by the Empress herself. This letter contained such an outrageous sentence that I was infuriated by it. It settled any hesitations I might have had and I no longer wondered whether or not I should go to stay with my mother. I wrote my husband that I had been on the point of joining the Empress Marie Louise, but that his severity had reminded me too clearly of my former sufferings, and I intended to escape them by taking refuge with my mother. At the same time I reassured him as to the health of his children. I also wrote the Empress and the Emperor apologizing for my conduct and giving the true reasons for it. All these letters I turned over to the officer, who had practically received orders to take me back with him as a prisoner.

While I was writing these letters I was interrupted for a moment by Colonel de Carignan, who with his regiment was supposed to cover the retreat of the rest of the

troops and who was much perplexed as to what to do as he could find no one qualified to issue orders. He was indignant regarding the conduct of the Minister of War who had left without leaving any instructions. I was forced to issue them myself finally. I asked him to keep his regiment in town until I had left and especially to inform me if his scouts caught sight of any Cossacks. This having been done and my letters written and addressed, I was completely worn out and was about to snatch a few moments' rest when suddenly someone came knocking violently at my door, crying out as he did so, "Make haste, make haste; we must leave at once." I was sure the Cossacks were close at hand and sprang up, but it turned out to be a false alarm caused by some other travelers who were leaving and who by mistake had knocked at my door. The Château of Rambouillet, filled with all those people whose fears had caused them to leave Paris, had become a public hostelry open to every passer-by.

At dawn the Duchesse de Raguse, and the Duchesse de Reggio, Madame de Sainte-Aulaire and Madame Mollien arrived. They were greatly upset because the capital had capitulated. They told me the Emperor was doubtless proceeding toward Paris and that their husbands were prepared to die fighting beside him. After listening to a hundred futile comments on the situation, I advised them not to remain any longer at Rambouillet, since the town was in danger and I was leaving it immediately myself to go on to Navarre.

My route led through the forest.[21] I sent a gamekeeper ahead of me to act as guide. Hardly had I entered the wood when one of my servants dashed up at full speed, completely out of breath, to announce that he had just caught sight of the Cossacks in the near-by plain of La Queue. I examined a map of the environs of Paris, which I had had the foresight to secure, as there was no one with me who could advise me, and I saw that taking

into account the distance and time-element I was heading directly toward the enemy. I retraced my route and returned to the broad military highway.[22] I had scarcely proceeded a mile on the road when I saw a Cossack emerge from the woods and gallop off across the plain. My groom dashed after him at full speed, and he disappeared in the woods.

I had not a moment to lose in crossing the plain before the arrival of the main body of the Cossacks. Not being able to stop at Maintenon I asked the colonel of a French regiment that fortunately happened to be there to let me have an escort to accompany me across country as far as Louye, the estate belonging to Monsieur d'Arjuzon, my gentleman in waiting, who with his wife had accompanied me. It was there I was planning to spend the night. At that moment a messenger passed from whom I learned that he had just left the Emperor at the Cour de France[23] and that the Emperor was going alone with an aide-de-camp to Paris.

This news affected me deeply. I imagined that Paris was about to be entirely destroyed and that the Emperor, after having made desperate efforts to rescue his capital from the hands of the enemy, would perhaps succumb himself along with all those who were by his side. What a horrible thought that was! "Ah," I exclaimed, "if my advice had only been followed all these disasters might have been avoided." The shock of all these thoughts threw my mind into utter confusion.

Having at last arrived at Louye I dismissed my escort and entirely alone gave way at last to the weaknesses of my sex. As long as I had been obliged to protect the safety of my children, as long as I had been active, courage had not deserted me. But now, reassured as to the fate of those beings who were particularly dear to me, I was conscious of the disaster that had befallen my country and my friends. Blood and flames seemed to be all about me. The quiet of this countryside contrasted so violently

THE CHATEAU OF QUEEN HORTENSE AT AIX
Drawing by Queen Hortense in the Collection of Prince Napoleon

with the carnage which I imagined was taking place only a few miles off that I almost regretted the turmoil from which I had just escaped. Nevertheless the night spent at Louye gave me a rest I needed after the fatigues of all kinds that I had lately undergone.

The following morning [24] I arrived at the house of my mother, who after having been so much worried and so anxious about me was overjoyed to see me once more. She was quite as ignorant as I of what had taken place in Paris. We soon heard the facts from a servant who had managed to escape. He described the entry of the allied armies which he had witnessed and spoke of the return of the Bourbons that was said to be about to take place. This information seemed to me bearable after all the horrors my imagination had conjured up.

"In other words it is merely a change of dynasty," I said. "Well, as long as France does not suffer we must not mind if we are sacrificed." The calamity thus appeared less serious than I had thought it would be, and my nerves became calmer. But when we heard that among the young women who had hastened most eagerly to greet the foreign invaders there were several who had belonged to the Empress's own household we were deeply grieved that well-born French ladies should behave in a manner which would have made women of the most common class blush. Our national honor was never dearer to me than in these moments when it was shamed under the very eyes of the enemy.[25]

The *entourage* of the Prince of Benevento [Monsieur de Talleyrand] had been as I learned later the hotbed of this revolution. For a long time he had been in relations with all the enemies of France through the Princesse de Courlande and the Duc de Dalberg. He had taken care to have himself arrested at the gate the day he was pretending to follow the Empress and he had spent the night [26] at the house of the Duc de Raguse doubtless encouraging him to commit those acts of treason which took

place the following day. The Duc in making his troops capitulate had dared name as one of his conditions that the life of the Emperor, whose cause his surrender overthrew, should be spared. Consequently he was fully conscious of the importance of his acts. How shameful to bargain with the enemy for the life of your commanding officer! Why was he not at his side, fighting with him?

We awaited news of the Emperor with the greatest anxiety. It was at the Cour de France that he heard of the capitulation of Paris. Alone and without troops, he could not proceed and he returned to Fontainebleau.

Monsieur de Maussion, one of the accountants employed by the Duc de Bassano, was the first to give my mother news of what had taken place. In the middle of the night she entered my room and all in tears threw herself on my bed as she exclaimed: "Poor, poor Napoleon, he is being sent to the island of Elba. How unhappy he will be . . . If it were not for his wife I should go and shut myself up with him."

I saw how deeply she still loved him and thought bitterly how much courage she had needed in order to leave his side.

Monsieur de Maussion gave us additional details regarding the tragic events which had taken place. During his narrative my mother's attention seemed absorbed only by the Emperor's misfortunes. His fate grieved us deeply, but so far as I personally was concerned the news that the Bourbons had been recalled to the throne of France, that peace was about to be signed, that the nation as a whole seemed contented, and that we did not have to bewail the loss of any of those whom we loved—all this appeared a happy solution compared with the disasters I had feared a short time before. It is easy enough to console oneself for the loss of wealth and of a royal crown. Human mishaps carry with them the power of ennobling the soul of the person on whom they fall. That soul becomes proud and contented beneath their blows, it is no

longer wounded by them and it seems as though one's moral stature grew as one's social position decreased.

Always inclined to be hasty in making my decisions I already concluded that I had lost all my possessions in France, that the only fortune I now owned was my diamonds, and that with them I should go off to Martinique and settle down there in a little house which still belonged to my mother. How glad I was to have instilled in my children from their earliest years those principles which fortify men against the vicissitudes of life! I took advantage of the present circumstances to accustom them not to count on anything except what they could obtain by their own efforts. I found a kind of pleasure in depicting our lot to them in the darkest colors and ended up by saying with a smile: "My children, you are nobodies now. No longer do you possess kingdoms, or principalities, or dukedoms. Perhaps it is best for you that this should have happened, but in order to make it so you must be obedient and work hard."

Already when the enemy drew near, in order to make them share in the public misfortunes, I had suppressed their dessert at dinner, and they had accepted this little privation very willingly. Now again my son replied, "Mama, if you want me to, I'll be a soldier, and some day perhaps I'll be a colonel."

"Alas," I answered deeply moved, "perhaps you will never be able to fight for France."

"If that is so, mama," he answered immediately, "I shall never fight against France." My only answer was to pick him up and kiss him. His brother inquired if he could no longer have his wooden rocking-horse. I told him he must give it up, and he never mentioned it again.

Mademoiselle Cochelet, to whom I mentioned my idea of taking refuge in Martinique, made me promise to keep her with me no matter what became of me. She and Monsieur de Maussion went off to Paris to attend to my affairs there.

Although we were always anxious to obtain further details regarding the Emperor we had only such news as was to be found in the newspapers which a groom who had remained at Malmaison forwarded to us. These papers were so filled with insulting remarks about the Emperor that the Empress felt indignant as well as wounded by their attitude. "Let them accuse him of being too fond of glory, of being too ambitious, but at least they should not slander him about other matters regarding which I know more than anyone else," she exclaimed; and she went on to explain warmly all the misstatements contained in the papers.

To me the Emperor already seemed too much a historic figure to be affected by remarks printed in some news-sheet or other, no matter how eloquent those remarks might be. The only thing that pained me was to see Frenchmen reviling in his misfortune the man whom they had acclaimed when he was successful. We, like the rest, had for years found fault with him for the incessant wars for which we perhaps wrongly held him responsible. If we were mistaken in this it was because his power so dazzled us that we were inclined to consider him the source both of conflict and of peace throughout the world. Indeed, our cause itself lost some of its appeal on account of our mistaken idea that by demanding so much from Fortune he had wearied her and thus drawn disaster on himself and on all France.

News reached us from Paris that the allied sovereigns wished to save my mother, my brother and myself by isolating us from the rest of the Emperor's family. A special guard had been dispatched to protect Malmaison. Mademoiselle Cochelet wrote me that Monsieur de Nesselrode, one of the Russian Emperor's cabinet ministers, had come to see her. She had been asked to transmit to me all sorts of expressions of respect and offers to do anything possible for me. Indeed, the terms in which the allies inquired after our welfare were so excessively cor-

dial, their offer of assistance so pressing, that it seemed as though they were more interested in what became of us than in the fate of the family who were coming back into power on the ruins we left behind.

Monsieur de Nesselrode asked my reader to inquire just what my projects were for the future as his masters had both the power and the wish to carry out any plans I might have. I refused to separate myself from my parents, and I accepted favors only after the treaty of April 11 had settled the fate of the Emperor and the other members of his family. I know that even Monsieur de Talleyrand when my future was being discussed insisted that my desires should be carried out, saying, "Oh, Queen Hortense! I consider she should receive special treatment." All the various political factions appeared to sympathize with the position in which my mother and I found ourselves.

The Empress and I both received letters from Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg.[27] This is a copy of mine:

Madam,

I am pleased to be able again to communicate with your Majesty and at the same time convey news that may not prove altogether disagreeable. Since my arrival here I have been worried about your Majesty's fate in view of the painful situation in which she finds herself. Monsieur de Humboldt was the first who succeeded in furnishing me with exact details as to where she was staying and thus reassured me. From that moment on I may say that the thought of how I might make myself useful to her absorbed me, for, up to now, I have never been able to show my devotion except in words. The arrival of the kind Mademoiselle Cochelet indicated to me what steps might prove the most agreeable to your Majesty and her August Mother. I resolved to speak frankly to my imperial master and I hasten to repeat to your Majesty the result of the

conversation, which took place yesterday. I trust that she will forgive me if I acted on her behalf without having received any instructions to do so. The kindest of Emperors, if I may call him so, said that for a long time he had desired to make the acquaintance of those princesses whose worth was only equaled by their charm, and that he was deeply interested in the fate of that estimable family which had behaved so nobly in such trying circumstances. He praised the conduct of the Viceroy highly, who alone had behaved in a dignified and noble manner. It would take too long to repeat in full all the favorable and true remarks the Emperor made regarding your Majesties. He finally asked me to convey to your Majesty as well as to her August Mother his desire to make their acquaintance. He would have gone to Navarre to call on them had this spot not been so remote, but he suggested they meet him at Malmaison as being nearer Paris and more agreeable. He hoped to see your Majesty there and also her children. At the same time he conveyed to me the most reassuring news regarding the business affairs of your Majesty's family. Mademoiselle Cochelet has undertaken to convey this letter to her as well as one in which I inform her Majesty the Empress what I have been able to do on her behalf. May I request your Majesty to be kind enough to inform me when she expects to arrive at Malmaison, and when her August Mother will also be there, in order that I may announce the fact to the Emperor in advance. May I also request her to treat me as her man of affairs, who will attend to anything she may consider necessary. At the same time I assure her that my greatest reward will be the knowledge that what I have done on her behalf meets with her approval. Until the moment comes when I can in person present my respects and beseech her to accept the expression of my complete devotion and profound respect, I have the honor to remain, madam,

your Majesty's most humble and most obedient servant,

Leopold, Prince of SAXE-COBURG,
General in the service of Russia.

Paris, April 14, 1814

The letter addressed to the Empress was very similar. I told my mother that I considered she was quite free to accept the invitation of the Emperor of Russia. The divorce had completely separated her from the Bonaparte family, and she must have someone to rely on. But as for me, my duty lay elsewhere and nothing could prevent my accomplishing it. I refused to yield to my mother's urgent request that I accompany her. I finally made her understand that I must be where there was the greatest need for my presence and as I felt sure the Empress Marie Louise must be overcome with grief I could not hesitate a moment longer than was necessary in going to her to console her to the best of my ability.

My mother therefore set out for Malmaison [28] and I for Rambouillet along the same route over which I had passed a few days before in such an agitated state of mind. Now I was calmer. I was no longer uncertain how to act. Our disaster was definitely accomplished.

At the moment I was leaving Louye, the estate belonging to Monsieur d'Arjuzon where I had again spent the night, my groom arrived from Paris bearing another letter from King Leopold of which the postscript was as follows:

Madam,

I have just been told by Mademoiselle Cochelet that your Majesty was no longer with the Empress, her mother, and that her August Mother would arrive alone in Malmaison. May I implore her, since I have received special instructions from Emperor Alexander to invite her to this conference at Mal-

maison, and know he is particularly anxious to have your Majesty present at it, not to delay her arrival there. I consider that this interview is of the greatest importance in deciding the future of your Majesty and of her children and I am extremely anxious that both the Empress and your Majesty attend this conference. Your Majesty will please forgive me if I seem to offer my advice. I trust she is sufficiently familiar with my attachment to her cause to realize that my action is prompted entirely by devotion and I hope she will prove this by graciously making her appearance at Malmaison.

Mademoiselle Cochelet added a number of arguments regarding my children. She based them on Monsieur de Nesselrode's opinion that I ought not to return to the Empress Marie Louise. They both agreed that it was most inadvisable for me to seem to identify my cause with that of a family whom France did not wish to hear spoken of again. To do so would prevent my making myself useful to my country in the future, and so on and so forth.

Although generally docile and easy to guide where the little things of daily life are involved, nothing can prevent me from executing what I have decided should be done. The more harm it seems likely to do me the more I insist on accomplishing it. Neither letters nor arguments had any effect whatever on me, and I set out for Rambouillet as I had decided to do.

On my way I met French cavalry retreating into Normandy. The dejected and dismayed appearance of these soldiers whose cause their commander the Duc de Raguse had betrayed at the moment when they believed they were going into action made me sigh profoundly. Soon I caught sight of the enemy's outposts. It was the first foreign uniform I had seen. I felt a pang of grief, which grew more keen as on arriving at the château I found Russian guardsmen waiting on the Empress Marie Louise. I arrived deeply touched and prepared to offer

her all the consolation that was in my power. I did not know whether I should find the Emperor's brothers with the Empress, but I heard that they had left for Switzerland and only the Empress and the King of Rome remained at Rambouillet.

My visit was announced. What a surprise awaited me! The Empress sent back word that she was not well, that she was writing the Emperor and would send me word when she could see me.

It seemed to me that in the midst of our common misfortunes, at a time when her heart should be still more deeply wounded than mine, a sign of sympathy should comfort her and not disturb her. I went to see the King of Rome. Poor little fellow! He was playing about in his sitting-room, quietly, ignorant of what the future held in store. I embraced him effusively and tenderly, after which I retired to my apartment, where a little later I received word that the Empress wished to see me.

I found her in bed, sad and depressed. She asked for news of the Emperor, complained bitterly about the conduct of his brothers and their persistency in insisting that she go farther away.

This was, however, in accordance with distinct orders given by the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor was most anxious not to have the Empress and the King of Rome fall into the hands of strangers. He had declared, "I should rather have seen my son in the Seine than in the hands of France's enemies." It was fear of this eventuality which had caused that unwise departure from Paris. It was natural, therefore, that the Emperor's brothers should have attempted to carry off the Empress and her son to some place of safety, especially as they had not dared infringe this order even when, by doing so, they would have increased the energy of the capital to defend itself. Thus these instructions must have seemed highly imperative. Yet, is it possible to conceive that mental turmoil which overcame everyone in these hours of trial?

Everyone considered that the Emperor's brothers had treated the Empress cruelly.[29]

She asked me what my plans were. I replied that my only idea had been to come to her and offer her my consolation. This seemed to embarrass her and she remarked: "I am expecting my father tomorrow morning.[30] I shall be very glad to see him all alone. Moreover, he does not know you, and I fear he would be constrained before you."

I assured her that the only reason for my presence at Rambouillet was the hope that I might be useful to her in some way, that I had acted entirely on impulse, but not being able to do anything I should leave the following morning to go back to my mother, who was most anxious to have me with her.

This explanation seemed to satisfy her. "You are more fortunate than I am," she said. "No one has abandoned you and I have hardly a handful of people to wait on me." What was most on her mind, however, was her meeting with her father the next day. I could not understand why this should upset her so, and I was trying to reassure her when she suddenly said to me, "Ah, sister, do you think it possible that my father will insist that I go to the island of Elba?"

I confess I was so astonished I did not know what reply to make. Was such a thing possible? Here was the woman who swore she could not be away from the Emperor twenty-four hours at a time and whose pretense of affection had baffled entirely my theories by its intensity. I at first could not believe that a woman brought up in the atmosphere she had lived in could conceive a violent affection for the Emperor, although I thought it quite natural she should admire him. Her conduct during the years of the Empire had persuaded me that I had been mistaken. I had finally become convinced that no political scheming lay at the bottom of her demonstrations

of affection. At what a moment did I discover the truth! So it was only the crown she regretted.

This grief was too entirely due to wounded self-esteem to appear important to me. I felt that my mother needed my presence more. There was a heart which had been broken by the sufferings of a man she had always loved. She alone really required my care. My only thought was how I might get to her the quickest. The following morning I made my farewells to the Empress. I was much less wrought up than I had been when I arrived.

On the highway a few miles from Rambouillet I met the Emperor of Austria and Monsieur de Metternich driving alone in a little open calash.

CHAPTER XII

THE FIRST RESTORATION: THE DEATH OF JOSEPHINE (APRIL 16—MAY 31, 1814)

The Return to Malmaison—A Visit from Emperor Alexander—The Treaty of April 11, 1814—Napoleon at Elba—Josephine and Madame de Rémusat—Eugène in Paris—Business Affairs—An Excursion to Marly—The Etiquette at Saint-Leu—A Newspaper Article—Josephine's Last Illness and Death—The Farewell of the Emperor of Russia—The Inheritance of the Empress.

AT one o'clock in the afternoon [April 16, 1814] I arrived at Malmaison. I was astonished to find the courtyard crowded with Cossacks and I inquired the reason for their presence. I was told it was because the Emperor of Russia was walking about the garden with my mother. I went to look for them and met them near the hothouse. My mother was delighted and surprised by my arrival. She kissed me tenderly and said to her companion: "This is my daughter and these are my grandchildren. You must take good care of them." She released the arm of the Emperor, who immediately offered it to me. Thus we found ourselves, the Emperor Alexander and I, side by side, without having looked at one another or exchanged a word. We were some little distance from the rest of the company and rather embarrassed in beginning our conversation. My position was a difficult one. Although I had for a long while been hearing favorable comments on my present companion even from Emperor Napoleon himself, and though I had formerly been most anxious to make his acquaintance, this was hardly the moment to say so. A distinctly reserved attitude was what I felt I must adopt toward the man who had invaded and conquered my country. Had he not begun to talk about the visit I had just made the Empress

Marie Louise, I believe I should not have managed to say a word. Fortunately this awkward situation did not last long.

We arrived at the château where my mother and children joined us. With her usual grace my mother found subjects to talk about. The Emperor, in phrases which seemed sincere, deplored the ravages of war and assured us that far from seeking to satisfy any personal ambition his sole purpose was to put an end to the slaughter. These sentiments at least consoled me more or less for the sad position in which France was placed. I was grateful to him for expressing them, but I remained silent. He petted my children a great deal and asked me: "What is there I can do for them? Please let me look after their interests."

I replied that although I appreciated his offer there was nothing I needed for my children. He left, and my mother reproved me for the distant manner with which I had treated him. I pointed out to her how misplaced any display of warmth would have been toward a man who had just declared himself the open enemy of the Emperor, whose action had just destroyed my children's future and the position of the family whose name I bore.

I did not dare ask the French nation to share my regrets for the past. People seemed overjoyed at the downfall of the Empire. Every day brought letters and resolutions from all parts of the kingdom approving what had taken place in Paris, and thousands of voices saluted the Restoration as ushering in a new era of freedom. The less the changes of fortune affected me personally, the less I considered myself justified in betraying my absence of concern at what had taken place. The public would not have understood my point of view. In its hastily formulated judgments it would have considered me hypocritical, as I should presumably have been afflicted by this change in my social position, and my misfortunes would indeed have justified my being sad. It would have re-

quired only a slight effort on my part to adopt the proper attitude and it was my duty not to lower myself in the eyes of the public.

I also felt uncomfortable to hear the Emperor so frequently accused of being responsible for having postponed a peace that everyone desired so eagerly. The foreigners were all the time talking about establishing that era of good will which was so necessary for the human race, and lavishing on France all sorts of magnificent promises of riches and happiness of all kinds. I was jealous at seeing them act in this manner. I did not at the time realize that all their promises were merely snares and delusions, and that the unhappy masses were soon to find themselves worse off than they had been before.

I shall not go into the details of the Emperor's abdication. I shall not examine the motives of those who advised it. I prefer to speak only of those who behaved well up to the very end. Among them Marshal Macdonald and the Duc de Vicence deserve especial mention. The Duke deserves credit for the way in which he defended the interests of the Emperor and his family. He wrote me a letter about what he had done on my behalf in the treaty of Fontainebleau,[1] where it was decided that I could continue to be separated from my husband and where the guardianship of my children was assured me, a clause for which he had secured the approval of Emperor Napoleon. This is what he wrote:

Madam,

Your Majesty retains her children; she may continue to live among her friends. Everything she cares about has received as favorable treatment as circumstances will permit. I am pleased at having been able to secure conditions which will be agreeable to her and of which I wish to be the first to advise her. Your Majesty is aware how devoted our family is to her. I hope she will count on this devotion and that in the midst of the misfortunes which

surround her she will continue to rely on our respect and loyalty.

I remain, etc.

CAULAINCOURT, DUC DE VICENCE.

Paris, April 11, 1814

He sent me at the same time the clause in the treaty which referred to me and which read as follows:

ARTICLE VI. In the countries whose sovereignty the Emperor relinquishes for him and his family, certain estates, or sums taken from the Treasury, furnishing an annual income, free of all charges, amounting to two million five hundred thousand francs, shall be set aside. These estates or funds to belong to and be the property of the princes and princesses of that family to do with as they see fit. They shall be divided among them in such a manner that the income shall be apportioned as follows:

To Madame Mère [Napoleon's Mother]	300,000	francs
To King Joseph	300,000	"
To King Louis	200,000	"
To Queen Hortense and her children	400,000	"
To King Jerome and the Queen	500,000	"
To Princess Elisa	300,000	"
To Princess Pauline	300,000	"

There shall be set aside for Prince Eugène, Viceroy of Italy, a suitable domain outside of France.

The Empress Josephine was to keep an income of a million francs,[2] which reverted to the State after her death.

All these agreements made it appear as though I were about to enjoy an ease and independence such as I had never known before. My mother hoped I would remain

with her. This was the only point that had not yet been settled. As she had for the last few years been living in seclusion and not appearing at court, there could be no harm in her staying on in France. This was more difficult for me. The idea of exile had been one which at first I was ready to accept but which, when I reconsidered it, seemed like too much of a sacrifice. I did not dare to speak of it to her nor think of it myself.

As the Emperor of Russia had paid us a visit at Malmaison everyone felt the need of following his example. The Prince of Neuchâtel was among those who called. He appeared embarrassed and sought to find excuses for his conduct, speaking of the Emperor's ambitions, the happiness of France, and a thousand other phrases which always occur to those who desert us in hope of making their fortune elsewhere. He was an industrious soul, hard-working, skilful in the performance of his duties as a staff officer, but possessing neither a remarkable mind nor much cleverness. The Emperor had found him, taken him, used him, and from force of habit come to consider him as a friend.

I also saw Bernadotte, the Swedish Crown Prince. He had formerly been a republican, was honest, possessed a gracious and polite manner and remarkable military talents. He wished to explain his conduct, and it is always awkward when your conduct requires explanation. He assured me the Emperor's unfair attitude toward him and toward Sweden was the only reason for his taking up arms against his former master, and that these arms had been unused since he set foot on his native soil.

The King of Prussia and the Princes of the Confederated German States also hastened to call on my mother.

I have already said that until then I had remained entirely ignorant of political matters in general. The result attained, peace or war, being the only thing which gave me cause for joy or grief. This was in fact true of all women during the Empire. Everyone would have

thought it ridiculous for a woman to have anything to do with political matters. The Emperor had set the fashion in this respect. In view of the prominent position I occupied, this ignorance became dangerous for me at the time to which I now refer. I found myself suddenly in a position such as I never imagined I should be called to occupy; the whole question of our national interests and rights, the sentiments people might try to make me and my family express, the rôle they sought to make us play were all equally unfamiliar to me.

One day the Empress brought in to me Marshal de Wrède, whom the King of Bavaria had sent to see her in regard to her son's position. "Now," she said, "I shall leave you with my daughter. She knows better than I do what would be best for her brother."

A few months before the Allies entered Paris, the King of Bavaria had written my mother, seeking to win Eugène away from the imperial cause. The Allies offered him the Italian crown if he would consent to go over to them. My brother very rightly refused. On remembering this incident it seemed to me that if the person who came to see us was sent by Eugène's father-in-law it must be because some new decision favorable to him had been arrived at.

Marshal de Wrède told me that the King of Bavaria had instructed him to find out from us what territory the Viceroy would prefer to rule over. My brother at the time was at Mantua with his French and Italian troops. Although I had not the faintest knowledge regarding international affairs this inquiry, coming as it did after a treaty stipulating that the Viceroy was to continue to enjoy sovereign rights, might mean that certain powers wished him to remain in Italy. As far as he was concerned I was sure that having devoted the best years of his life to organizing the prosperity of that country he would prefer to spend the rest of his days there, and I mentioned to the Marshal the Duchy of Milan as suit-

able for him. He replied that he was about to send the Viceroy a messenger and advised me to write him to proceed immediately to Paris, as this would be greatly to his advantage, both in his own opinion and in that of the Prince of Metternich. In spite of my inexperience in politics I grasped the fact that Austria, which was more anxious than any other nation to assure her rights in Italy, would be the last country to surrender the smallest portion of that territory to anyone else. Consequently, if the Austrian minister advised my brother to leave his army and come to Paris, the most advisable policy for Eugène to pursue was the opposite.

Always impulsive and eager to communicate to those I love ideas which may benefit them, I wrote to my brother that he had best keep up his army in order that he might negotiate to better advantage, since I had learned by what had happened in France that the man who places himself at the mercy of his enemies always has cause to regret that action. Had it not been decided that all hostilities should cease at once?[3] Had not the Emperor Napoleon given himself up? And what fate would have befallen the Emperor, would even his life have been spared, without the intervention of the Emperor of Russia?

My letter, full of remarks of this character, ended as follows: "You have obeyed your generous impulses long enough. It is time you thought of your own interests. Do what you should, what you can, what you dare." I handed this letter to Monsieur de Wrède. In those days I was very young. It never occurred to me that anyone would open a letter. I do not know how far honesty goes in diplomatic circles and whether Monsieur de Wrède had been told to trick me. All that I do know is that Monsieur de Metternich, who owed me a little gratitude and who on his arrival in Paris had talked about coming to see me, never appeared. Nor did any other Austrian ever ask admittance to Malmaison. Probably people considered that my advice to my brother was rather too out-

spoken. But the future proved that it was not worthless.

Perhaps it was after this incident that people did me the honor to refer to my political influence and considered wrongly I took an active interest in such matters. What they did not know was that in spite of the energetic advice I gave my brother I was more delighted with the unselfish way in which he behaved than if he had followed it, regardless of all the material benefits he would have obtained.

"The Emperor," my brother said to me afterwards as we were talking over the matter, "when he renounced the Italian crown stipulated that I was to have a principality. I did not doubt that the Allies would act in good faith, and although I could have continued to hold out for a long time in Mantua I would have reproached myself if I had exposed the life of a single man to serve my private interests. Too much blood had already been spilled, and the fatal incident at Milan [4] proved to me that the Italians were not ready to fight for their independence. Consequently, all my efforts would have been solely for my personal ends."

It was a curious fact that in acting as he did on this occasion, Eugène followed the example of his father, who when commander-in-chief of the army of the Rhine pursued an equally generous but more disastrous course. The Convention passed a decree excluding nobles from holding positions in the army. All the people who were with my father at the time advised him to engage in a battle which if successful would nullify the decree as far as he was concerned. He preferred to withdraw to his estate, for, as he put it, he did not wish to break any law no matter how unjust it might be and especially to spill any blood in his own behalf. Certainly both he and my brother enjoyed a feeling of satisfaction such as the ambitious man can never know.

The Emperor Napoleon was about to leave for the island of Elba. I had written him. He had replied and

seemed touched that I had been to see the Empress Marie Louise. He had not for a moment lost his self-possession and he considered in a perfectly calm manner whether or not he should live on. I have been told, but I have never had any proof of the statement, that he made an attempt [5] to end his days, but that finally he said, "One commits suicide to escape disgrace; one does not commit suicide to escape misfortune." He smiled sometimes at the insults which were cast at him from every direction. In saying good-by to those who had remained by his side up to the last moment he ordered them to be faithful to the interests of France and not to forget him. But the most touching moment of all, when every eye filled with tears, was when he sent for his eagles, pressed them to his heart, and bade farewell to his battle-flags, grown tattered on the fields of glory. His last thoughts were all for France's prosperity. Monsieur de Flahaut told me all the details of what happened at Fontainebleau and we both grieved over the misfortune of this great and noble man.

The Duc de Vicence, having fulfilled his difficult task, called at Malmaison. As French Ambassador to Russia he had occasion to appreciate the character of Emperor Alexander and to become very fond of him. The Duke reproached me for the coldness with which I had received the Emperor, who seemed to have been hurt by it. "Don't you know," the Duke said to me, "that he was the only one to defend the interests of the imperial family? If he had not been there, what might not have happened even to the life of Emperor Napoleon? You do not realize the hatred of the other monarchs, how they tried to humiliate him. Do you not know that if Emperor Napoleon has a refuge on the island of Elba it is thanks to the Russian Emperor?"

A few days later the Emperor Alexander came to Malmaison. He spent much of his time with me, playing with my children and taking them on his knees. I felt a moment's emotion when I thought, "It is an enemy on whom they are dependent nowadays."

ALEXANDER I, EMPEROR OF RUSSIA
A Water-Color by Queen Hortense
in the Collection of Prince Napoleon

The Emperor of Russia called again several times and seemed to enjoy being with us. I had opportunities to appreciate his tactful regard for others and the sensitiveness of his nature. His chief charm was his hunger for affection. He makes you trust him because he shows that he trusts you. He is so courtly in the way he seeks to make himself agreeable to you that you feel he wishes to be pardoned for making himself indispensable. I admit I regretted feeling this way about him. His character attracted me. I felt that I liked him, and it is annoying to have to accept constantly services from someone you like. Consequently I abandoned my former constraint and behaved more naturally, but as soon as he took up the question of my business matters my attitude changed. He also seemed embarrassed and the conversation went no further.

One day he said to my mother that if he sought only to satisfy her personal tastes he would place a palace in Russia at our disposal. He added, however, that she would never find a spot like her beautiful Malmaison, nor could my delicate health support the rigors of that climate. Finally he sent for my reader one morning and told her that as we ourselves would not express our wishes it was for our friends to decide what should be done, and that, as far as he was concerned, nothing gave him so much pleasure as to make himself useful to us. The Duc de Vicence was again instructed to confer with Monsieur de Nesselrode as to what had best be done.

The Comte d'Artois [6] was already in Paris, and everyone thronged around him. Madame de Rémusat, who so shortly before had been lady in waiting to the Empress Josephine, came to Malmaison one morning and gave her to understand that it was advisable for her (my mother) to pay some mark of respect to the family who were about to ascend the French throne. The Empress, so Madame de Rémusat said, doubtless wished to remain in France. But this would scarcely be allowed unless she had given evidence of her adherence to the cause of the Bourbons.

She then showed my mother the draft of a letter which she and Monsieur de Talleyrand had drawn up and which she advised my mother to copy and send to the Comte d'Artois. She doubtless thought her scheme would prove successful, for rumors of what she was trying to do, so contrary to my mother's dignity, had been widely circulated beforehand.

The letter itself was ridiculous. It concealed disloyalty to the Emperor Napoleon under cover of seeking personal advantages. I pointed this out to my mother when we were alone together. She showed it to the Emperor of Russia, who thought it in very bad taste and was most indignant about the matter. The Empress's reply to Madame de Rémusat was dignified and rather disdainful.

Madame de Rémusat came to see me, as she was convinced that I had placed obstacles in the way of the success of her negotiations. She talked about the legitimacy of the dynasty and pointed out how impossible it was for the Bourbons to recognize anything that had taken place since their departure from France and so on.

To this I replied: "The Bourbons are free to recognize whom and what they please. They are not free to pretend that what took place never happened. If our lofty titles annoy them we are willing to accept lower ones and live quietly. But we owe it to the people who made us what we are, to those who sought to serve us loyally, never to allow ourselves to act in a manner not worthy of that rank. We must behave in a proper manner; it is our duty to do so. As for other people, I admit that though a man may overthrow the god he has himself created, I assure you he acts shamefully when he rejects him."

She left greatly annoyed with me, and a hundred anecdotes about how attached we were to our titles, our regrets at the loss of our rank and the danger there was in our ambition to recover all this began to circulate in the drawing-rooms of Paris.

At the time when I had had the misfortune to lose Madame de Broc at Aix, Monsieur Sosthènes de la Rochefoucauld was there with his wife. He had sympathized with my grief and asked to be presented to me. He had married a Mademoiselle de Montmorency, who was very beautiful. Both had been brought up to hate our dynasty. He, however, did not include me in this enmity, and I won his confidence to such an extent that he admitted his attachment to the Bourbons and the resentment the exile of Madame de Chevreuse had caused him. He continued to come and see me in Paris, but made no effort to secure any position at a court which doubtless would have been only too glad to welcome him.

Madame Du Cayla, who like myself had been brought up at Saint-Germain and who had always been very friendly with me, shared the political views of Monsieur de la Rochefoucauld. Notwithstanding what had lately taken place they both continued to come and see me and did not seek to conceal their joy at the approaching return of the Bourbons. I considered this feeling a perfectly natural one. Indeed, I myself rather sympathized with this family, whose misfortunes had made such an impression on me when Madame Campan used to tell me about them. But like the majority of the French I was not aware of how many people were included in the family. The only one ever mentioned was the Duchesse d'Angoulême. People in Paris spoke of her as a sort of angelic creature whose return would bring peace and happiness to all. Everyone was touched by the thought of the suffering she had been through and memories of her mother [Marie Antoinette] still further increased the affection people already had for her.

The King had just arrived at Compiègne. All those who hoped to belong to the new court hastened there. I selected this moment to make a trip to Paris to attend to some business matters and allow all those who still were

with me an opportunity to seek to obtain new posts for themselves elsewhere.

The Emperor of Russia learned that I was in Paris and asked Monsieur Tchernycheff to inquire if I would receive him. When he called he said: "I am just back from Compiègne. What I see there discourages me. I love France. I wish her to be prosperous and I fear this Bourbon family will not know how to insure her happiness. The King showed me his proclamation. It was dated the nineteenth year of his reign. I advised him to remove this date, but he did not seem inclined to do so. I foresee that he will alienate many of his supporters, and his is not the kind of régime France needs. I am sorry because I feel I am to blame. But I did propose to Monsieur de Talleyrand to call the deputies together to draw up a constitution and fix definite terms on which the Bourbons should be allowed to enter Paris. But in the first moments of enthusiasm it did not seem as though the Comte d'Artois could get here quickly enough to satisfy the people. At any rate it is not my fault if they have made a mistake."

I listened to him without seeking to discuss a subject regarding which I might have said too much. I merely asked him about the Duchesse d'Angoulême.

"She may have qualities," he answered, "but if you saw her you would change your opinion of her. Even her voice is harsh and she has nothing of a woman's gentleness about her." He afterwards spoke about the Emperor Napoleon, told me how he had loved him, and how deeply he had been hurt to discover that he had formed a mistaken estimate of his character. He also said how doubly indignant he had been with the Emperor Napoleon for having provoked this war, since it estranged him from the man he had made a friend of at Tilsit and at Erfurt. Finally he concluded that although admitting the Emperor's genius he had sworn never to accept a reconciliation with him. Everything he said was uttered

in such a frank and sincere way that I could not help forming a favorable opinion of his character. Moreover he was the only man, Frenchman or foreigner, who spoke in a proper manner about the Emperor Napoleon. I believe I should have been indignant with anyone who might have pointed out to me that this man was an enemy of the family to which I belonged.

About this time my brother came to Paris, having surrendered on honorable terms to the Austrians. He was full of confidence in the future on account of the stipulations concerning him contained in the treaty of April 11.[7] He had taken his family to Munich to stay with the King of Bavaria, his father-in-law. The purpose of his visit to Paris was to thank the allied sovereigns and learn exactly what his fate was to be. He was well received everywhere, especially by the Emperor Alexander, who was anxious to make his acquaintance.

The only time he called at the court of the Bourbons the King, Louis XVIII, spoke of the good my mother had done for France; the Duc d'Orléans [8] mentioned his former friendship with my father. The Duc d'Angoulême paid little attention to my brother, and the Duc de Berry informed him that the French troops were very fine-looking and asked if he had ever seen any of them. But on the whole Eugène could not complain of the way he was received.

My brother had not been in Paris long before he became conscious that the execution of the treaty as far as he was concerned was most difficult. No one knew where he was to go; everyone held views about what ought to be given him. My mother's sole wish was that her son should receive a position worthy of him, but the only person who supported her claims was the Emperor of Russia. As regards the latter we found ourselves in a most extraordinary position. The friendship he displayed toward us and that which we felt for him precluded any idea of either of us acting from selfish

motives. Nevertheless, he seemed embarrassed to find himself acting as our protector when it was he who had brought about the entire change in our fortunes. He did not know how to make himself useful to us without risking hurting our pride. We who appreciated all his tact could not remember the harm he had done us, because of all the kindness he displayed in order to make us forget it. Still for more than one reason it was embarrassing to be dependent on him. He had entirely won our friendship. Though it is said to be pleasant to be under obligations to those whom you care for, that is not always true. It is enough to be able to admire those to whom one owes gratitude, but in the case of true friendship one is alarmed by anything that might tarnish the purity of that emotion. An obligation when contracted obliges one to feel grateful. Where real friendship is concerned one wishes every feeling to be wholly spontaneous and dreads any sense of obligation.

Every time the Emperor of Russia came to see me at Paris or at Malmaison it was difficult to avoid bringing up the subject of our affairs. One day I told him about having advised my brother not to leave Italy. I added that although altogether unfamiliar with politics I felt one should always avoid putting oneself in a position of asking a favor, but rather make the other party say, "Let me give way in order to have it over with." The Emperor laughed at my methods, but doubtless he found that they were fair enough. So great was his desire to make himself useful to us that he even called one evening on Mademoiselle Cochelet to find out from her details regarding my tastes and habits and what I might particularly desire. This action revealed how much he wished to look after our interests and touched me greatly. But what was there I could ask him either for myself or for my children? Fate had just deprived them of everything. I did not then know how difficult it would be to secure any recognition for them in the way of titles or rank.

Monsieur de Nesselrode had already declared it was impossible to give them sovereign powers anywhere, that in view of the name they bore none of the powers and especially not England would consent to abrogate the agreement among themselves that no members of the Bonaparte family were to be allowed to rule. The only thing that remained to settle was the question of their income, and for that the treaty of April 11 had made ample provision.

The Duc de Vicence recognized already how difficult it would be for him to see that the articles of this treaty were properly observed. He was pleased that in my case a separate agreement prevented the new sovereign from interfering with me. He therefore decided with the Emperor of Russia and Monsieur de Nesselrode that a duchy should be created for me out of the income of four hundred thousand francs, the sum fixed by the treaty of April 11, and coming from the forests that I owned near Saint-Leu, which a decree of the Emperor Napoleon had turned over to me several years before. Thus my children would have a fortune more firmly assured them than that which was mentioned in the treaty of April 11. This duchy which the Allies asked should be given me gave me a title better suited to my present rank and at the same time did not deprive me of that which the treaty itself declared was non-revocable. I should be able to stay near my mother, near my friends, in my native land. How many reasons there were for accepting what was offered me. I gave my consent without asking my husband's approval,[9] believing that he would be satisfied to have his children receive such a compensation, after all they had lost. He could do nothing for them himself. Should he not rejoice that chance had placed me in a position to assure them a home in their own country and to provide against their wandering about, obliged perhaps to make their way in life, far from the land where they were born? It was true I did not yet know how fierce political passions could be. I could never have imagined anyone

could hate little children of their age. Otherwise I should not have decided to leave in the midst of so many enemies those who were dearer to me than anything on earth.

The estate of Saint-Leu belonged jointly to me and my husband. When the latter left Holland the Emperor had intended to make it over entirely to me. I refused, not wishing to take advantage of the King's absence to despoil him of his property. Nevertheless, as I did not own any other ground elsewhere and as my husband had written me from Gratz that Saint-Leu belonged to me, it was decided that it was there the duchy should be created. The Prince of Condé had taken over again the possession of the forest which I owned but which formerly had belonged to him, but I still retained those of Ermenonville and of L'Ile-Adam, which were to belong to the duchy. The rest of the four hundred thousand francs was to consist, as agreed, in government securities.

While these various negotiations were going on, the Emperor of Russia naturally heard Saint-Leu frequently mentioned and wished to see what it looked like. He fixed a date [10] on which to get up a family party to spend the day there. The party consisted of himself, my mother, my brother and me. The only other person was Maréchale Ney, whom the Emperor frequently called on and of whom, like her husband, he was very fond. The Emperor drove up in a little calash, accompanied by Monsieur Tchernycheff. During lunch he remarked to me:

"Do you know that there is a solemn service being celebrated in Paris today in honor of King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette? All the foreign monarchs are supposed to attend, and as we drove out here I pointed to Tchernycheff the curious position in which I find myself. I arrived at Paris filled with animosity against your family, and it is only in their company that I enjoy spending my time. I have inflicted injuries on you; I have

benefited others; but it is only from you I secure sincere affection. Today I should be at Paris with the other kings and here I am at Saint-Leu."

We kept on chatting about the strangeness of human life and after lunch we all took a walk in the forest. We passed certain spots where I had had improvements made and which I pointed out with considerable pride. "None of this still belongs to you," remarked the Emperor sadly. He seemed so sorry to think that it was he who was responsible for the grief I probably felt that I answered gaily, "At least I am still able to enjoy it."

We remained till quite late in the park. My mother retired to the château, and while my young ladies played different games in the shadows of the tall trees, I walked about alone with the Emperor. He informed me how high an opinion of me he had conceived on account of my courage in enduring so many losses without seeming to be afflicted by them. I replied that I deserved less credit for not having been saddened by such a great loss than another person might have, since I had never really enjoyed my brilliant state and could not regret deeply a thing about which I had never particularly cared. I added that although I was indifferent about many things there were others which touched me deeply. Thereupon I proceeded to describe some of the saddest experiences I had gone through, the bitterness of which had destroyed my peace of mind. I was constantly expecting a new misfortune to befall me, and when it was not one which touched my heart, I felt greatly relieved. This condition had existed since the death of my son. My health had been profoundly affected and the recent loss of Madame de Broc, that friend of my childhood, had renewed all my despair and my fear of the future. The Emperor seemed to listen most attentively to even the slightest detail of my narrative and to be as much moved by my eulogy of my friend as though he had known her. Frequently he would interrupt me with the remark: "But

you still have friends. I have not met anyone anywhere who has not spoken well of you. You are unjust toward Providence and you do not trust enough in the loving-kindness of God."

He in turn related some of the sorrows that had saddened his life. He assured me he had always found prayer a great consolation, and he placed his hopes in God. He told me this incident: "When we were at the gates of Paris all the generals believed we ought not to attempt to take the city. We hardly had ammunition enough left for one day, as the Emperor Napoleon had outflanked us and cut us off from all our supplies. If Paris had resisted twenty-four hours, we might all have been lost. Alone, holding out against all the others, I persisted in favor of an attack. In this moment of cruel perplexity I withdrew to my own apartment. I realized the heavy responsibility which rested on my shoulders. I prayed God earnestly. Then, full of confidence, I no longer doubted we should be successful."

Imagine what my feelings were on hearing this. I learned that the fate of France, the overthrow of the Emperor, had only been a question of luck, and that the Emperor and his country had been on the point of emerging from the struggle victorious and greater than ever. But the opportunity had passed, and we must resign ourselves. I sought to suppress my emotions and continued our conversation.

I admitted to my companion that my misfortunes had disturbed my religious beliefs. To be sure I could not doubt the goodness of God, but when still very young I had formed the idea that He only sent misfortunes to those He desired to punish. I had received such cruel blows that I could not believe I had deserved them. From then on my ideas became unorthodox. I enjoyed doing good because it made me happy. All people who were unfortunate aroused my sympathy because I knew what it was to suffer, but deprived of any purpose in life

or any spiritual guidance I looked only to the hereafter to give me any consolation, any escape from my troubles. The Emperor disagreed with many of my ideas, which he considered pessimistic. He repeated to me several times: "Trust in God. He does not abandon those who love Him. . . . I have had cruel experiences in my own life," he added, "but my conscience, which justified me in the sight of God, fortified me always. I brought Him my troubles and He comforted me. He could justly reproach me for a certain fault which I feel I have not the power to resist. Yet I still place my trust in Him."

The Emperor went on to give me some details about his domestic life, in the happiness he found in a love-affair, illegitimate it is true, but which in the eighteen years it had lasted he had come to consider a sacred bond. He spoke of his children, described the woman he loved, and when his wife was mentioned he said, "Although any reconciliation is impossible between us, she has no better friend than I in the world." The games the young ladies were playing had stopped. People were waiting for us. We went back into the house.

In spite of the kindness the Emperor did not cease to display towards us, my mother, who was constantly sad and depressed, could not overcome her anxiety regarding my brother's future. I promised her that I would overcome my embarrassment and speak to the Emperor Alexander about this, but after dinner she herself had a talk with him which seemed to relieve her mind. When he was on the point of retiring for the night the Emperor assured me that nowhere had he felt as much at home as in my house. Elsewhere, wherever he went he encountered a formal atmosphere which he found oppressive. Instead of this, when he was with us he felt as though he were at home. I explained that the flattering opinion he had formed was due to the informal atmosphere I had created in my drawing-room and the pains everyone took not to seem unduly conscious of his presence.

The Emperor of Russia left at nine o'clock in the evening, and my mother and I returned to Malmaison the following day.

I heard that at the newly constituted court this intimacy of ours with the Emperor of Russia was very much and very unfavorably criticized. Monsieur Sosthènes de la Rochefoucauld came and told me how much everyone had been shocked at the date I had chosen to hold a reception for Emperor Alexander. I replied that neither my means nor my position allowed me to give a reception; the date had been chosen a long time in advance and the entire affair had been a purely informal one and not such as would shock anybody. He then confessed that my mother's intense popularity had given offense at court and there had been rumors going about that she was having funds distributed among the working classes.

I smiled at such stories and related the following incident: "While we were at Blois the Emperor's treasure-chest was in danger of being captured. It was therefore judged advisable to pay over to the persons present the sums due them, especially as the treasury department was behind in its payments. A sum of 600,000 francs was deposited with a local banker on behalf of my mother and myself. This represented only a part of what was due us. A few days later the Duc d'Angoulême while passing through the town seized that deposit, which was our legitimate property, paid his soldiers with it, and we have never seen a penny of it since. The rest of the Emperor's private funds were turned over to the Provisional Government." By way of conclusion to this story, I said to Monsieur de la Rochefoucauld: "You see how plausible it is that my mother, who is known not to have any money of her own, should distribute money to the discontented elements of the population."

I do not know if what I said convinced him, but I noticed that all the signs of sympathy which the aristocratic class had previously been lavishing on us vanished

and instead we were regarded with distinct suspicion. Jealousy had a great deal to do with this attitude. The Emperor of Russia cut a great figure in the eyes of the old nobility. They thought themselves the only persons worthy of his notice, while he on the contrary, instead of seeking their society, sought that of the very people whom he had come to overthrow. Consequently all sorts of stories got about regarding meetings of conspirators at Malmaison, where they made threats against the royal family, and an unfavorable interpretation was placed on the Emperor of Russia's frequent visits. Even his own ministers became alarmed and spoke to him about the matter, but this did not prevent the visits from continuing as before.

One day when my mother was not very well and could not go out, my brother and I took Emperor Alexander to see the famous waterworks at Marly. On the way there we discussed the general subject of friendship and we referred to that which united Eugène and me. The Emperor also spoke feelingly about the union which existed in his own family, and then turning to my brother he added: "I can hardly believe that I have only known your sister such a short time. She seems to me to be someone I am meeting again and whom I knew in the past. I feel absolutely sure not to be misunderstood when I talk to her."

I thanked him for this tribute and assured him it touched me deeply. Then the conversation changed and we spoke of the recent campaign. He explained to my brother the reason which had caused the delay of the troops marching by way of Troyes for twenty-four hours —that delay of which Emperor Napoleon took advantage to beat the two armies separately at Montmirail. The Austrians and English had resolved on their arrival at Troyes to declare their intention of refusing negotiations with Emperor Napoleon and to proclaim the return of the Bourbon dynasty. He, on the other hand, had

been alone in his determination to push on first to Paris in order to discover there what the French really wanted and give them an opportunity of themselves choosing the monarch they desired. While this discussion was going on and the Russians were advancing along one route, the Austrians halted for two days; this lack of unity in their movements was fatal to the plans of the Allies, thanks to the skill with which Emperor Napoleon took advantage of their weakness.

Emperor Alexander had asked me questions about the Empress's divorce. I read him a few pages I had written at the time it took place, as well as my letters to Madame de Broc, which had been returned to me after her death. He seemed deeply touched by what had happened to my mother and declared he could not understand why the Emperor Napoleon had not adopted my brother. Each time I talked with him our growing intimacy inspired me with an increasing confidence. Acting under an instinct that sprang from the interest I felt in him, I one day took it into my head to remind him of the wish of his subjects, who complained of the manner in which he seemed to neglect the Empress, his wife. I knew that people were anxious to see them reconciled. He repeated several times, "It is altogether impossible."

"But you have no children of your own."

"I have my brothers."

"Do not the wishes of an entire nation count for anything?"

"I cannot go into all these details with you. Please, please do not bring up the subject again. My wife has no better friend than I, but a reunion can never take place."

I said nothing, and the matter was never brought up again.

It was with Monsieur de Blacas, one of the King's cabinet ministers, that Monsieur de Nesselrode negotiated the arrangements which concerned us. He asked my reader Mademoiselle Cochelet to notify me that every-

thing had been concluded, and the duchy had been duly created. The paper containing the contract was sent me, but the terms were so unseemly [11] that I immediately decided to refuse. I could not forget who I was, and if the King of France chose to do so I was not prepared to receive any favors from him. I was quite prepared to exchange my title, but I would only agree to do so as being entitled to a new one by right, not as a disavowal of the rank I had formerly occupied.[12] My reader took my reply and my refusal to Monsieur de Nesselrode. The advice of the Duc de Vicence was asked. Emperor Alexander declared that he demanded other letters patent, drawn up in terms which I could accept. He rebuked Monsieur de Nesselrode severely for not having shown him the first draft before it was sent me, and presented profuse apologies to me for what had taken place.

This was what was finally stipulated. As the treaty of April 11 conserved all our titles, the letters patent should be drawn up in accordance with that treaty and refer to me as Queen Hortense. The Duchy of Saint-Leu was bestowed on me. My children were to inherit it after my death, and their father to have no right to it whatsoever. I continued to hesitate, fearing that the hostility which I felt arising against me might disturb my children's life in France.

On the other hand my love for my native land and my mother's grief at the thought of our being separated outweighed my scruples. I gave the Duc de Vicence full power of attorney to sign such terms as would conciliate my children's material interest with what I felt I owed to my position and the name I bore.

It distressed me to note that the grief of the Empress was affecting her health. Although the constant demonstrations of affection which she received seemed to dispel her sorrow for a few moments, as soon as she was once more alone with me her eyes would again fill with tears. The picture of the Emperor hurled from his throne and

confined to the island of Elba constantly hovered before her and racked her soul. She turned for solace to all those who had been near him and even sought out that young Polish woman of whom she had been so jealous. She enjoyed seeing her, believing that she must experience the same feelings as her own. Nor was she less tormented as to my brother's future. Even her own fate was a source of constantly renewed uneasiness. The treaty of April 11 had stipulated that she was to continue to receive one-third of her previous income. Nevertheless she was obliged to dismiss more than half the members of her household. Her servants came and wept round her. She did not have the courage to dismiss these faithful attendants and ended by keeping them all. But where could she find means to continue those allowances, amounting to nearly three hundred thousand francs, which she paid out annually? How many people she must make miserable! Moreover, her too great liberality had caused her to contract a large number of debts that she wished earnestly to pay. Would her diamonds provide enough money to do this? In the midst of all these worries her kindness, her graciousness, the charm of her manner had not altered in the least.

Of all those who owed their lives to her intervention the Marquis de Rivière was the only one who came to see her. Monsieur de Polignac, whose life she had also saved, and to obtain whose pardon she had thrown herself at the Emperor's knees, did not even pay her a courtesy call.[13] The first symptoms of people's ingratitude are always painful. It is disagreeable to have to complain of the conduct of those for whom one has been glad to do a favor. Many Frenchmen, having called once, as they doubtless felt they were obliged to do, did not again appear at Malmaison. Other motives led them elsewhere. Only certain foreigners and those Frenchmen whose feelings did not change with changing fortunes continued to come with the same regularity.

The Emperor of Russia was about to hold a review of his troops. He invited my brother to attend it. Eugène asked to be excused, adding that he would have accepted with pleasure anywhere except in France. The Emperor took his hand in a most friendly manner, saying, "I quite understand. Pardon my having invited you."

This is an example of the Emperor's really feminine thoughtfulness. It was this refinement of feeling that made him attractive. He understood everything and seemed even to appreciate the reserve one displayed toward him, since he was conscious of the motives which prompted this reserve. The reason for my brother's refusal was doubtless the same as that which prevented Monsieur de Flahaut not only from going to call on the Emperor of Russia but from even meeting him at our house. Monsieur de Flahaut admitted all the Emperor of Russia's splendid qualities, recognized the fact that I should be grateful to him for all he had done, but continued to consider him, nevertheless, as an enemy of France, the sight of whom he would prefer to avoid. On the other hand the majority of the generals found in Emperor Alexander a defender against the new order that was coming into effect. Delighted with the manners of all these soldiers who were being presented to him the Emperor said to me one day: "How fortunate must be the king who governs a nation which vibrates every time the word 'honor' is pronounced! How much one could do with such material!"

"Those who have remained aloof, and whom you have not had the opportunity of meeting," I replied, "are those who would give you a still more favorable opinion of our army."

The Russian Grand Dukes arrived in Paris accompanied by their tutor.[14] The Emperor Alexander sent them to spend the day at Malmaison. He had said to me before they arrived: "The Empress is extremely alarmed at the idea that my brothers are in Paris. She fears that

they may be fascinated by the charms of the French women. I scarcely dare send them to Malmaison."

"Do not worry," I replied. "Although we are surrounded by young and charming girls I shall play the part of a dragon." This remark amused him greatly. The young Grand Dukes attracted attention by their fine manners, their courtesy, and the humane sentiments they displayed in regretting the disasters which the war had caused. They had just passed through several of our ruined villages, and tears stood in their eyes as they described what they had seen. In walking about in the picture gallery at Malmaison both were attracted by the same picture. They examined it closely. It represented a landscape covered with snow. "This reminds us of home," they said, deeply moved.

The Grand Duke Constantin [15] had already been several times at Malmaison. He told us repeatedly that throughout France he had heard only favorable remarks about my mother and myself. He was most anxious to have a collection of ballads I had composed and had had printed for some of my family circle. I gave him a copy. I also gave the Emperor Alexander the original manuscript, which is now preserved at the palace of the Hermitage.[16]

The King of Prussia and all his family also came to Malmaison, the same day as the Grand Duke Constantin.[17] My mother, although far from well, made an effort and came downstairs to receive them. She seemed to have only a bad cold, and her generally robust health prevented anyone from feeling in the least alarmed. Even I felt sufficiently reassured to go to Paris to attend to some business. The Emperor of Russia, hearing I was there, came to see me. He had just been dining with the King of France. He could not help making remarks about what he had seen, the length of the meals, how much everyone seemed to enjoy them, and even went so far as to say: "The Tuileries have not always been in-

habited by the kind of people that live there now; a great man lived there not so very long ago, whereas today . . ." He did not conclude his sentence. I judged it expedient to change the subject.

My brother came in from Malmaison, where he had left my mother feeling more poorly. She had been much upset by a newspaper article which spoke of my son who had died in Holland and who had been buried temporarily in a tomb at Notre Dame while his tomb at Saint Denis was being finished. The paper declared in offensive terms that the body was about to be taken from its present sepulcher and put into the public cemetery. In order not to wound my feelings an effort had been made to keep me from seeing the article, but in the end I was obliged to read it, so that I could beg the safeguard of the precious remains. I confess what hurt me the most in the whole matter was to discover how much hatred there was in the hearts of those to whom, from now on, were entrusted the destinies of my native land. I cannot conceive of a jealousy that would go so far as to insult the corpse of an innocent child because in the past he had been the object of certain hopes. A being whom an entire nation had loved even for an instant should certainly be entitled to more respectful treatment. There can be no question of either politics or national dignity in such an attitude, which outrages both the sentiments of a race and the heart of a mother. As for me, instead of being grieved at the idea of a possible transfer of the remains, I thought that it might result in my having my son's body at Saint-Leu.[18] In other words, near me. Thus he at any rate would be safe from such base maliciousness. I merely pitied any group of people who allowed themselves to yield to a spirit of vengeance, to whom even a grave was not sacred; I foresaw to what lengths of folly such feelings might drive them. I heard—and I prefer to believe it was so—that neither the King nor any of his family had anything to do with this shameful episode.

After seeing my brother I at once hastened to the side of my mother. I found her worn out and still worrying about the effect this newspaper article might have on me. I noticed she spoke with difficulty.[19] Her doctor declared that all she had was a touch of fever and I was wrong to be anxious, as it was nothing more than a cold. He said that her pulse was better than mine—for just then I was threatened with an attack of consumption, and my health was a great source of anxiety to my friends. I did not leave my mother. I watched her breath become more and more labored. I sent for her doctor and after a long discussion finally persuaded him to place a plaster on her neck. Reassured at having taken this precautionary measure I felt that I had won a victory and, feeling far from well myself, went to bed. I expected that the plaster would have produced a healthy reaction by the next morning. It had acted, to be sure, but I was astonished to find that my mother's cough had become much dryer. I learned later that she had taken a glass of Seidlitz water, hoping to relieve the oppression in her chest, and this I presume was what had caused the more intense irritation. In vain, in order to reassure me, the doctor kept declaring that it was nothing but a cold. I insisted on sending for my own physician. In order not to alarm my mother I said that he was coming to see me, but that I should be glad if she would allow him at the same time to examine her.

"No, no," she replied, "I do not want to see any other doctor. To do so would be to hurt my own physician's feelings." I did not dare press the point. My mother had always enjoyed such excellent health that I refused to admit even to myself that she was in the least danger, and yet at the same time I could not shake off a vague feeling of uneasiness. In the course of the day [May 27, 1814] the Emperor of Russia sent us his head doctor. Although quite exhausted my mother received him with her customary graciousness. "I beg you to express my

thanks to the Emperor of Russia. I trust his sympathy will bring him good fortune."

Emperor Alexander was to have come to dinner the following day. My mother settled a hundred little details that might increase his comfort and expected to be well enough to get up. When he was leaving, the doctor was not able to conceal from us what his worried air had already indicated: namely, that he found her very ill and that he recommended she be covered with plasters.

Terror-stricken I sent for the best doctors in Paris. To add to my difficulties a very high fever had obliged my brother to take to his bed. Misfortunes surrounded me on every hand, but instead of giving way to my grief I was stimulated by the thought that I must concentrate all my strength and will-power on those who needed my care.

I was about to ask the Emperor to postpone the dinner till another day when he made his appearance considerably ahead of time. I received him, informed him of my fears and took him to see my brother, with whom we arranged that his presence should be kept from my mother lest she be worried thinking he had not been properly entertained. I returned to her bedside. I told her the Emperor had sent word asking to be excused and saying that he would come another time.

"I am sure," she said, "the reason he did not come was because he felt embarrassed not to have anything new to report about your brother's affairs. That must be what kept him away." I replied I was convinced that matter would be arranged satisfactorily in the end.

She repeated several times: "You must take it on yourself to speak to the Emperor of Russia about your brother's fate. He is the only one who feels well-disposed toward us. We must not let him leave before a decision has been arrived at."

The physicians hesitated to tell me the truth. They only stated that the illness would be a long one. I arranged matters so that I, her attendants, or mine would

in turn spend a night sitting up with her. My physician and my maid began. During the day a sort of feverish energy had sustained me. I was constantly going back and forth from my mother's room to that of my brother, where the Emperor, who only left us in the evening, was keeping him company.

I stayed by my mother till late. I had brought the children in to say good night to her. She had sent them away saying, "The air is not good in here. It might harm them."

She also always kept insisting that I leave the room and made such a point of it that the doctor finally forced me to go and take a little rest. It was impossible for me to sleep. The menace of misfortune seemed to me to be almost unbearable, and at times I would try to turn my mind away and concentrate on other things, as though to escape from some gloomy specter born of my alarm. Twice I got up to go into my mother's apartment. My maid told me I need not worry. She was resting quietly, and yet she uttered at times these unconnected words: "Bonaparte . . . the island of Elba . . . the King of Rome."

The next day, May 29, was Pentecost. My brother, who had left his bed in spite of his fever, went into my mother's room with me while it was still early. As she caught sight of us she stretched out her arms and spoke a few words which we could not understand. She seemed quite distraught. A few hours later I found such a change in her that for the first time the terrible knowledge that I was about to lose her entered my mind. I was unable to control my despair. My attendants carried me into the next room. My brother informed me that the sacraments had been sent for, but that nevertheless the doctors had not given up all hope. We went together to hear mass and pray for that life which was so dear to us. Tears streamed from everyone's eyes, and all those about us seemed to share our grief.

I went upstairs again to my mother, summoning up all my courage to speak to her quietly of the sacraments she was about to receive and thus prevent her experiencing too great a shock when they should be brought to her. I sought to seem calm myself in order that she might feel so also. Indeed, I still ventured to hope. But when on entering her room I saw the marked change that had come over her features in less than a half-hour, I was unable to say a word. Not even able to take the hand she stretched out to me I sank down beside her bed. I was carried into my own room. What took place I cannot say. A few moments later my brother hurried in, took me in his arms, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "All is over." She had received the sacraments [20] with the greatest calmness, and her last thoughts were doubtless for her unhappy children.

A moment later my room was filled with all those young women who like myself had just lost their mother. They came to mingle their tears with ours, and it is impossible to describe the grief that reigned about us. How intense was everyone's sorrow! How could anyone resist it? . . . The carriages having been brought up, I was taken to Saint-Leu.[21]

I cannot tell what is the sad charm that lingers about a spot where one has just suffered a loss, but when you leave it you seem to be bidding farewell once more to everything you regret. It was not till I arrived at Saint-Leu that I became conscious of the full extent of my affliction. Such violent and such tragic emotions as those through which I had just passed brought on intense nervous headaches. I was unable to leave my bed. My brother, alarmed at my condition, nursed me with a tenderness to which I was not accustomed. For the first time in my life I found by my side someone on whom I could call for comfort and support in my hour of distress. I appreciated this deeply, and though my heart was torn with grief yet I still was grateful to Providence for not

having deprived me of everything. Sorrow one shares is softened and becomes easier to bear. From every side marks of sympathy arrived. The foreign monarchs who were in Paris and even the French royal family expressed their regrets. The Emperor of Russia more than anyone else displayed a sympathy at which we could not feel surprised. He wished to attend in person my mother's funeral. My children went, but not feeling strong enough to go ourselves, we sent word to the Emperor, who sent General Sacken to represent him.

When he left Paris he spent one day at my estate at Saint-Leu, going on from there to England. He had asked us to prepare a room for him quite informally, and arrived at night. The next morning at ten o'clock my brother brought him into my room. I was too ill to be able to get up yet. They both breakfasted beside my bed. The Emperor was in mourning as we were. He seemed to feel our sorrow, to share the same sense of loss. I felt as though I had found a brother at the moment when Providence had just deprived me of a being whom I loved. Our conversation was a melancholy one. The Emperor accused himself of being in a way responsible for our misfortune. He claimed it was due to my mother's grief over what had taken place. The more he seemed to us to be right, the more anxiously we tried to refute his arguments. He described how the Emperor of Austria had heard of my mother's death. In the morning as he was going out alone he met a common workman in the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. This man, not knowing who he was, stopped him and said: "Have you heard the news? That kind woman the Empress Josephine is dead." This is an example of how widespread the grief was.[22]

Emperor Alexander received several messengers during the day he spent with us. He wrote dispatches and walked about with my brother. I dressed and came downstairs, and we all had dinner in my little drawing-

room. He should have left that same evening, but, I heard since, he wished to be sure before going that the question of the letters patent creating the Duchy of Saint-Leu had been satisfactorily arranged. The King had strongly objected to signing them on account of their referring to me under the title of Queen. The Emperor of Russia had been obliged to declare that his troops would remain quartered in Paris until those letters had been sent off. He received them in the course of the evening, but did not wish to hand them over to me himself. He felt that they had lost much of their value to me, since they were intended to assure that I should remain with my mother, and she now was no more. He sent for my reader and told her that when it would be possible to discuss business with me she was to tell me I need not make any acknowledgment or express my thanks in any way to the King of France, as he [the Emperor of Russia] was exceedingly annoyed at the reluctance which had been shown in arranging the matter, and that I must not expose myself to a possible rebuff.

The Duc de Vicence came in, in the evening, and informed us that the King had at last signed the treaty of April 11, but that this was due to the vigorous intervention of the Emperor of Russia. The Duke had at once, with the permission of the government, dispatched one of the Emperor Napoleon's servants to convey this news to him at Elba.

The Emperor of Russia spent that night also at Saint-Leu and left very early the following morning for England after telling Eugène he would see him at the Vienna Congress.

My brother and I both wished to write to the Emperor Napoleon to inform him of our recent loss, but the messenger of the Duc de Vicence had already left, and we could not secure permission to send another. I was most anxious also to let him know how my personal affairs had been arranged, but the Duc de Vicence told me he had

already done this, and that after having described the negotiations to the Emperor he had added, "As for Queen Hortense, suitable provisions for her and her children are being arranged in France." His letters were sent by a servant who was going to Elba with them. It was therefore impossible to write direct, as all correspondence with the Emperor had been forbidden. Therefore we considered it best to wait till matters had become calmer.

In the first few days that followed our bereavement all Paris society came to see me. So much sympathy with us was liable to offend the government. We already knew that it was distinctly hostile toward us. My brother felt the drawbacks of a prolonged stay in France and he wished to conclude his affairs and leave afterwards for Munich.

Monsieur Soulange and Monsieur Devaux were appointed to settle my mother's estate, which people said was a very considerable one. Yet it consisted only of her country place at Malmaison, the Château of Navarre, which the Emperor had entailed for my brother, her pictures and diamonds, an income of thirty thousand francs in government securities, and her property in Martinique. But as she never understood much about money matters and as she never knew how to say no to anyone who asked her for something, she left about three million francs' worth of debts. Our business advisors suggested a sale, which they declared would be profitable since everyone was anxious to secure some object that had belonged to her. But it was disagreeable to us to think of all our mother's personal belongings being exposed to the public and knocked down to the highest bidder. My brother and I therefore agreed that these personal belongings should be given to the young ladies who had been her attendants and whose welfare she looked after. Doubtless in benefiting them we were carrying out her intentions. The income was divided among them to act as dowries when they married. One of them did so at once.

The servants were so numerous that in order to dismiss them and give them six months' wages we were obliged to borrow two hundred thousand francs. Of all the children my mother had undertaken to educate and care for, we took over only those who were in the greatest distress. The servants who had been with her for several years received pensions, which we promised to continue. My share of these pensions, not including those I was already paying personally in spite of the change in my position, amounted to more than thirty thousand francs annually. My mother's maids of honor and her equerry each received a carriage and four horses. Her ladies in waiting received shawls and different souvenirs. We were the last to keep anything for ourselves. It seemed as though our position was assured. I was to receive an income of four hundred thousand francs, and my brother important domains. Our only thought had been to make other people happy; but, do what we could, was it possible to satisfy everybody? People were discontented.

My mother had been in the habit of giving out annually pensions amounting to between two and three hundred thousand francs. We kept only sixty thousand francs of these pensions. It was said that people were being treated unfairly. Servants who were only entitled to fifteen hundred francs' allowance a year demanded three thousand. My brother, because he believed that what the Allies would give him would enable them to pay off the debts of my mother and also because I could do nothing for him, took the real estate. I had only half the picture gallery and half the diamonds. The newspapers talked of this estate as amounting to fifteen millions.[23] We did not consider it worth while to deny these reports, especially as the prominent position my mother had occupied for such a long time made such exaggerated figures seem possible. It was true she had been wealthy, but she gave away everything she had and frequently more besides. People enjoyed enlarging upon the extent of her

fortune as well as ours, in order to contrast the luxury that existed at the imperial court at its most dazzling moment with the so-called distress in which the former royal family were supposed to have lived during their exile. The Duchesse d'Angoulême went everywhere without any jewelry, wearing no diamonds or cashmere shawl, and seemed very much attached to her little English bonnet. Perhaps this calculated simplicity of appearance was to some people a sign of her former misfortunes, and therefore increased their attachment to her, but others considered it a sign of an entirely foreign education and perhaps of that ignorance of these princes regarding the customs and habits of the country they had been called upon to rule.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST RESTORATION (CONTINUED) [JUNE 1, 1814–MARCH 4, 1815]

Eugène's Departure—Louis Protests Against the Creation of the Duchy of Saint-Leu—A Visit from Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier —Life at Plombières and at Baden-Baden—Hortense Returns to France —The Incident at Saverne—Louis Bonaparte's Lawsuit Against Hortense—A Visit to Louis XVIII—The Queen's Lawyers—Some English Visitors—The Queen's Drawing-Room—The Duchesse de Bassano—The Bourbons.

MY brother felt every day that he should be leaving Paris. Workmen from the suburbs had made a demonstration in front of the Tuileries and demanded work in a peremptory manner. We heard that among their protests Eugène's name had been pronounced. It became necessary for me to look forward to being deprived of my sole moral support. I felt as though in leaving [1] me my brother took with him everything one's native land has to offer in the way of protection, and that I was about to find myself in the midst of strangers with pitfalls on every side, pursued by malicious gossip and hounded by treason and ingratitude. The country of my birth, where no one had a complaint or reproach to make against me, where my family had sought to do good to everyone, had changed and become hostile.

I will not be so unjust to those rare friends who have always remained faithful to me as to say that I forgot their presence. But how could they defend me? Even their zeal was occasionally indiscreet. Frequently people holding absolutely contrary political views met in my drawing-room. Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo, a Corsican by birth, Russian Ambassador in Paris, whom his master had asked to safeguard my interests, came there from

time to time. On one occasion he had rather a sharp discussion with a young French colonel, Monsieur de La Woestine, whom misfortune had embittered and who in the presence of Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo enjoyed deliberately ridiculing political conditions which the Russian envoy had helped bring about. I learned that Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo had complained of the liberty with which seditious opinions were expressed in my house, but was entirely unaware of the fact that this minister had been the personal enemy of Emperor Napoleon. He informed me of the fact himself, and his vanity went so far as to give me certain details about his knowledge of the characters of the two emperors and of the skill with which he had known how to play one against the other. Being aware that Emperor Alexander was particularly susceptible to personal remarks he had managed, by quoting remarks which Napoleon had made when excited, to increase still further his master's enmity toward him. It was on this enmity, which he had built up little by little, that he counted to bring about sooner or later the downfall of Emperor Napoleon.

For instance, if Napoleon made some friendly offer to Russia which was not replied to immediately, the minister would offset it by drawing Emperor Alexander's attention to some article in the French press attacking his personal character and by suggesting it had been inspired by Emperor Napoleon. Well aware of the effect this would produce he kept alive Emperor Alexander's irritation by reminders of the other's impatient character.

I had had so little contact up to that moment with political circles that it was Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo himself from whom I first learned of his enmity toward Emperor Napoleon. I had indeed never heard of the man before he presented himself to me in the name of his sovereign, the Emperor of Russia. The knowledge of this feud enlightened me as to the dangers of my position.

Even at home my enemies were those who were in

power, and my only protectors were foes of my own family.

As my health required a trip to a resort it was agreed that my brother, his wife and I should all meet at Aix-en-Savoie. I wished to have my children accompany me, but the advice of the Duc de Vicence and several other people who knew about political matters was that it was better not to have them leave the country so soon after having been granted the right to remain there. Such an absence might serve as a pretext for breaking the agreements which had been made and for preventing their return. On the contrary, it was advisable to accustom people to their presence in France.

About this time the newspapers published a communication from my husband, who refused in his own name and that of his sons the terms contained in the treaty of April 11. He also caused the letters he had written on leaving Holland to be printed and even those he had sent by Monsieur Decazes, to the Senate and the *Corps Législatif*. Among these papers was included his letter to me which the Emperor had never given me but had mentioned when he expressed his displeasure at seeing a French father refuse French titles for his sons. In this letter my husband forbade me to receive anything from my brother and turned over to me as a source of revenue his private estates in France and Holland. Of these the former did not pay expenses, and the latter did not exist.

I confess I considered it extraordinary that my husband should choose the moment when his brother had just been overthrown to court public favor for himself at the Emperor's expense. Was it not misplaced vanity that caused him to inform the public what terms he had refused at the time of his abdication, since everything he ever possessed had been given him by his brother? Human beings can act as they please, choose their own fate, but they should not try to decide the future of others. Would not his children some day be justified in reproaching him for

having deprived them of that noble title, Prince of France, and of the advantages which went with it? It was this renunciation which the Emperor had spoken of as insane. It was on this important point that I based my resistance to my husband when he now asked me to send him his sons or at least the older boy. His past attitude did not inspire me with confidence as to the future. Yet it was possible I was making a mistake, for in questions of policy, only the result proves whether one has been right or wrong, and the result was something I could not foresee. I wrote my husband that I should be pleased to take his children often to see him, but I begged him not to deprive them of the future and the nationality which I had won for them.

From London I received a charming letter written by the Emperor of Russia. He doubtless did not wish his ambassador to know that he was writing me for the dispatch had been placed directly in the hands of Monsieur Boutiaguine, secretary of the embassy. The secretary warned me that, judging by a remark Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo had made, the ambassador had noticed this lack of confidence in him and had been offended by it. Thus it came about that he first feared the person he was supposed to protect and later came to desire to harm her.

The enthusiasm aroused by the return of peace had given way to a general feeling of unrest. No one yet knew just what was the matter, but the manner in which some people were made much of at court and certain others were neglected showed that in future the privileged class would consist of a little group made up of the men who for twenty-five years had done nothing useful in behalf of their country, or who had even actively fought against her. The promise of peace and especially of more liberal measures of government had caused the Bourbons to be welcomed, but already the prospect of such measures was threatened by various laws they had introduced. People made fun of certain old-fashioned

customs that the government attempted to revive. The princes had amused themselves by conducting mimic war just outside of Paris. This was considered an unseemly parody of the sad and sanguinary events from the effects of which the capital was still suffering. The Duc de Berry believed he could, by an air of petulant ill humor, imitate the Emperor's grave severity and he shocked people's feelings by his attitude. The more the government felt it was losing the nation's confidence the more it became suspicious and the more mistakes it made.

I had praised the waters of Aix-en-Savoie highly to the Empress Marie Louise and she obtained permission to take a trip there. This greatly worried the police department and French court circles. They felt themselves in peril on account of a journey undertaken by a woman who to them seemed threatening to recapture what she had not known how to keep. I had made no secret of my plan of meeting my brother at Aix. Monsieur Boutiaguine informed me that our presence there at the same time as the Empress appeared suspicious to the French court. Even Monsieur de Blacas, one of the King's cabinet ministers, told me he would be pleased if I changed my plans and thus showed my desire not to make the Bourbons uneasy. I willingly consented, and I wrote my brother that I was going to Plombières.

Before I left, Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier asked to be allowed to call and thank me for my efforts to have their sentence of exile suspended. Although the Emperor had not consented to my request they were none the less grateful. They arrived one morning accompanied by Prince August of Prussia. Madame de Staël asked me many questions about the Emperor, spoke of going to see him on the island of Elba, and wished to know in detail everything he had said about her. I told her that he had judged her severely, but had been more indulgent towards Madame Récamier, whose exile doubtless he would have shortly suspended. She could not con-

ceal her satisfaction at the distinction he made and hastened to call her friend over to tell her what she had just heard. She repeated it with a great deal of emphasis as much as to say, "You are nothing but a child. People did not consider that you mattered whereas they were afraid of me." Then she turned to me and said complacently, "Really, you don't think he would have ever let me return to France?"

We spoke for some time about the liberty of the press. I, who had never thought about political matters of any kind and who remembered how much I had suffered in my home-life from the license of insult displayed by the English newspapers, attacked this facility for condemning a person on insufficient evidence and for misrepresenting what might be entirely innocent and harmless. I declared that it was necessary to have a certain power of control over the press on account of our national tendency to make fun of serious subjects. Our excessive appreciation of the ridiculous, which distinguished us from other nations, made us unable either to respect or to admire a person or idea which had been wittily pilloried even unjustly. It was desirable that the French nation should both respect and admire its rulers, for the day they began to be looked at contemptuously their power was at an end. Madame de Staël easily refuted this, pointing out to me how much more important public welfare was than private interests. She maliciously added that it was clear my ideas were colored by personal experience. She little suspected that neither the Emperor nor anyone else ever talked to us about politics. It was the first time in my life I had heard such subjects discussed in my presence.

Madame de Staël possessed a great deal of charm when she managed to remain feminine, but her decided manner when arguing a point and her dogmatic attitude, natural enough in the case of such a superior mind, made her appear to me far less attractive than I had expected. When I looked at her I thought that in order to have

inspired as many passions as she had either men's love must often be a question of vanity or else she must be endowed with those rare spiritual gifts which alone inspire and preserve affection.

She was very intimate with Madame Récamier. Her fine brain and her mental superiority over the other members of her sex did not diminish the other woman's more timid, more elusive appeal. On the contrary, while Madame de Staël dazzled people by the brilliance of her intellect, her companion captivated them by her winning grace. Although the distinguished air of Madame de Staël had scored many successes Madame Récamier possessed a remarkable beauty, a gentleness, a kindliness and a simple, direct and subtle common sense which also attracted many admirers. Thus possessing also those qualities which win men's respectful admiration she was really the Ninon de Lenclos of our day.

I must unconsciously have hurt the pride of authorship in Madame de Staël. As we walked about the garden we spoke of foreign travels and the beauties of other countries, and being very absent-minded I asked whether she had ever been to Italy. Everybody at once exclaimed, "And 'Corinne'! Have you forgotten 'Corinne'?"

"Of course!" I exclaimed, realizing what I had said. "But then I read so little of it."

"Do you mean to say you have not read 'Corinne'?" someone inquired anxiously.

"Yes . . . No . . . That is to say, I must read it again."

People looked at me. No one could understand my speaking of such a work in this manner and especially in front of the author. An explanation was necessary. It did not seem an appropriate moment to make it.

This was what had occurred. The novel entitled "Corinne" appeared just after I had lost my son. The book was given me to distract me from my melancholy, but overwhelmed as I was with grief I recalled only a

few phrases, some descriptions, and felt a fear of rereading a volume the memory of which was connected with my misfortune.

Madame de Staël's visit made the government so uneasy that the secretary of the Russian Embassy, Monsieur Boutiaguine, informed me of the fact; and this was why I made no attempt to see her again.

I went [2] to take the waters at Plombières accompanied by a single lady in waiting. The place was a melancholy one. The only people I knew there were Monsieur and Madame de Saint-Aulaire and General Delaborde and his wife. I had been expecting my brother for two weeks when I received word asking me to meet him at Baden. The Grand Duchess of Baden also extended me an invitation. The waters there being about the same as at Plombières I did not hesitate to accept. There were a great many foreigners at Baden just then. Among them were the Empress of Russia, the King and Queen of Bavaria, the dethroned Queen of Sweden, the Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt, and the Margravine of Baden, the mother of all these princesses. As soon as I arrived the King of Bavaria, as usual very kind to me, hastened to call. We exchanged visits with the other princesses and I had no reason not to be pleased with the way in which they received me. It was evident that they were curious about me.[3] The Emperor of Russia in his letters to his family had often spoken of me, as their friendly attitude showed. I could not help being pleased with their attentions, which were both marked and affectionate.

The Empress of Russia invited me to dinner with all the queens and princesses who happened to be there. She possessed a great dignity of bearing together with a *savoir-parler* that was truly royal. Her features were distinguished, and it was evident that she must have been very beautiful. Her voice had an inexpressible charm, and her melancholy air made her particularly lovely. The Queen of Bavaria, her sister, resembled her in many

respects. I have always found her so kind and sympathetic toward me that I would not be speaking impartially if I expressed all my admiration for her.

The German princesses possess a certain affability, but in general they are not natural enough. After you have once met them you always find them exactly the same. Most of them are not aware that lofty rank demands simplicity, that kindliness is a ruler's greatest charm just as an active charity is his first duty. Generally they are too much overawed by the rules of etiquette. While of course a certain amount of formality and reserve is necessary at court, where lack of them would set a bad example, still in domestic circles all constraint should be abolished and greater familiarity be made the rule.

I received a visit from Madame de Krudener whom I had not seen since my trip to Baden in 1809. She now spent all her time taking care of the poor and the unfortunate. I found her still more high-strung than she had been before, exceedingly tender and sensitive in her religious beliefs, placing love before all else in the world. Her voice had taken on a tone of prophecy and exhortation, her features an inspired expression. She communicated her feelings the more easily to others because she vibrated so intensely with them. She persuaded people because she herself was so sincerely convinced. Indeed, it required a decidedly strong will to resist the lure of the marvelous visionary universe she described, a universe which her whole-hearted benevolence made still more attractive. It was hard not to fall a victim to the powers of her imagination. She began by deploring in most moving terms the losses we had suffered, that of a devoted friend, a dearly loved mother, not to mention my lofty position; and she urged me to bear all this without complaint as a form of trial, the reward of which I should receive in the life to come. Her words fell on willing ears. I wept as I listened to her, and she mingled her tears with mine.

All at once she said to me in a mysterious tone, "If you wished to do so you could know what had become of those you loved." My sobs immediately ceased. I felt myself in the presence of a madwoman, and my surprise was so great I could not answer. She noticed this and made no attempt to convince me.

Changing the subject she inquired what my plans were, and when I replied that I intended to stay in France she exclaimed: "Do not stay in France. You do not know the misfortunes that will overtake you. Go to Russia. Only the people who are there will be saved."

"But," I answered, "it was the Emperor of Russia himself who decided that I and my children should remain in France. Perhaps I should have done better to go and live with my brother. He has not yet received the territory that was promised him but will ask for it at the Congress of Vienna."

"Ah," she replied, "that congress will never end. Mark my words. Emperor Napoleon will leave Elba. He will become greater than ever, but those who have taken his side will be persecuted, pursued and scattered. They will not know where to lay their heads."

"What can I do?" I said. "I am his daughter and if he returns I must cast my lot with his."

She left me, repeating, "Remember 1815."

After all the very real misfortunes that had overtaken me the hallucinations of a mystic could not make much of an impression on me.

I also met at the house of Grand Duchess of Baden, Prince Ypsilanti, son of the last hospodar of Wallachia. He described vividly the sad lot of Greece enslaved under a foreign yoke, and spoke of his joy if he should ever be able to succeed in freeing it from its oppressors. I shared his enthusiasm. I also deplored the fact that instead of exhausting their strength by fighting among themselves the civilized nations did not unite to deliver such an unhappy race. The generosity of the Prince's feelings

pleased me. In accordance with my habit of distributing good-luck charms to those who were about to go into battle I gave him a talisman to protect him from the dangers upon which he seemed about to embark. I was far from imagining that his dreams were so soon to become realities and that Fate had marked him for a gloomy death in a cell at Munkács.

I left at the end of August to return to Saint-Leu. I again bade farewell to my brother, who was about to go to Vienna to claim vainly that position which the treaties had stipulated he was to receive, while I instead of enjoying the peace which I so desired was about to find myself again in the midst of intrigues, plots and dangers of every description. I traveled both day and night. At six o'clock in the evening just as my horses were being changed at Saverne I caught sight of four French officers in a little carriage stopping outside the posting-house.

They exclaimed, "There is Queen Hortense. French officers could never fail to recognize Queen Hortense."

I sought to remain as inconspicuous as possible, for I had no reason to seek too flattering tokens of recognition, and I gave orders to leave immediately. The evening was so lovely that I had my carriage stop farther on at the foot of a hill in order to walk a little way. To my astonishment I saw these young men follow me. They bowed, greeted me by name and expressed their pleasure at the opportunity of catching a glimpse of the daughter of their Emperor. They offered to escort me as far as the top of the hill. I accepted, unwilling to repulse their politeness. One of them expressed his despair at seeing France in such a humiliating position. Another declared he would rather be in chains again, as he had been for a long time while a prisoner in England, than witness the disintegration of our army. They spoke of the enforced abdication of the Emperor, of his anniversary, which they had just celebrated in spite of the rule forbidding such commemorations, and they swore never to rally

to a dynasty which had been imposed by foreigners. I sought to quiet them, insisting on the benefits of peace, the necessity of resigning oneself to circumstance and of resting after having accomplished so many heroic feats.

"No," they all replied, "we cannot live and feel ourselves humiliated. Remember us, if ever you have need of us. We shall always be utterly devoted to you. A word from you will be enough to make us undertake any enterprise. Here are our names and those of the regiments we belong to." At that moment we arrived at the top of the hill on which stood a triumphal arch just erected for the Duc de Berry, who, so they told me, was expected shortly, but they added, "It is you who will be the first to pass beneath it." Saying this and catching sight of the guards who were supposed to protect the arch they carried me toward it shouting as they did so, "Long live Queen Hortense!" "What luck!" they added. "At least this one triumphal arch will have served some useful purpose."

I was anxious to reach the posting-house, and my expression must have been that of a criminal undergoing his punishment, for such a demonstration, particularly under existing conditions, was not at all to my liking.

When at Phalsbourg the officers saw I was keeping on traveling by night they wished to accompany me on horseback. Conscious of the fact that they did not care how far they compromised themselves, I had all the trouble in the world to make them understand that although such devotion touched me it could nevertheless do me a great deal of harm. They finally left me and I was much relieved. I never saw them again and have never heard them mentioned, but, as my readers will readily understand, when later I heard that these regiments under Marshal Ney were advancing to meet the Emperor I had no doubt which side they would take.

I arrived at Saint-Leu without further incidents but

only stayed there a few days. My doctors had ordered me to take some sea baths after the waters. I left for Havre, again accompanied only by one lady in waiting. I preserved the strictest incognito and was rather annoyed at first not to be able to find a room except in a second-rate inn filled with English people. Fate, however, was kind to me. I had told my *valet de chambre* to go and knock at all the doors on the quay to see if there was not a house for rent. The first place he went he encountered an old couple who were about to leave for their country place and who, without knowing who I was, agreed to rent their house on my servant's word that we were respectable people.

I spent two very quiet weeks there, taking my baths, going for walks, reading, all entirely alone. One day I was invited by my landlords to take tea with them in the country. The flower-beds and drawing-room were filled with hortensias. They praised the flower and spoke of the queen after whom it had been named.

I had not yet been recognized, but soon rumors of my presence caused my old couple to call. They were deeply upset, fearing they had been frightfully impolite, and begged my pardon. I at once put them at their ease, and they informed me that this house was the one where I had lived at the age of four with my mother when she was about to sail for Martinique. Chance had brought me back to it twenty-six years later. How many things had taken place in the meantime! How many events happy and unhappy had occurred to both my country and myself! I was even introduced to the captain who had commanded our ship. This coincidence delighted my hosts, who had become my friends, and also struck me as curious.

I returned [4] to Saint-Leu. This time I had decided not to leave it again, and to devote myself entirely to my children's education. I felt a sort of satisfaction at the thought that, in the midst of their misfortune, they would

at least acquire a firmly grounded education far from the flatteries and distractions of the court and in a situation which required a man to depend on his own ability and to develop what talents he possessed.

The weather was marvelous. I had regained some of my strength and after so many vicissitudes felt that the time of tranquillity to which I felt I was entitled had at last come. It did not last long. One morning a young man, Monsieur Briatte, presented himself. He was stiff in his manner, abrupt in his speech, convinced of his own importance, and thoroughly suited to the negotiation which he had been instructed to carry on. Formerly my husband's private secretary in Holland, Monsieur Briatte had through his protection obtained a post as referendary at the *Cours des Comptes* in Paris and kept up a correspondence with his former master. From the latter he had received orders to come and claim my elder son from me, as the boy's father insisted absolutely on their being together. He even pointed out how kind he was to leave me the younger child. The tone of the letter which demanded that the child be turned over to Monsieur Briatte was a threatening one. This blow stunned me. Although I had feared it for a long time it fell on me as if unforeseen. My whole life revolved around my children; it was for them that I sought to regain my health, for them I still struggled to keep alive. The thought of my loved ones was the only thing that sustained me amid all my tribulations. The idea of being separated from them filled me with terror. I wished to be able to reason coolly, but my brain throbbed frantically with emotion. I was clearly aware of all the dangers that threatened my son if he left my side. His father's poor health would result in his neglecting the child's education, and he would not know how to form his character. Might not even the boy's own health suffer and his natural good disposition become altered? My mind and heart were so completely at one in this dilemma

that I took the grave step of refusing my husband's demands. Daily I summoned up my will-power. Daily I fixed my mind on the idea of resisting his wishes, because I felt it was my duty to do so. It was simple enough for me to point out that my son ought to remain in France and that his personal interest lay in his staying on in his native land. I emphasized this point. I also wrote my husband that I was willing to take his children to see him. I implored him not to ruin their future but to seek to make it as happy as possible. It was with anxiety I awaited his answer, which it seemed to me would be a question of life and death to me.

Having finished my period of deep mourning I thought of expressing my thanks to the King for having granted me permission to remain in France and for having created a duchy which my children would eventually inherit. To be sure the Emperor of Russia had told me I should not do this in view of the hostile attitude which Louis XVIII's ministers and the King himself had shown in regard to the issuance of the letters patent. At the same time I felt that I owed him a visit. He had become the ruler of that France where I intended to spend the rest of my life as a private citizen, where I had no one to protect me and where I felt myself surrounded with malevolent intrigues and perils of all sorts. Already I felt that people were looking at me with suspicion and I thought the best way to prevent their having any pretext for adopting this attitude was to pay the King a visit of courtesy. To do this was less disagreeable to me than my friends imagined, for I felt I was doing right. If I received a cold reception the fault would not be mine. Moreover, I had decided to withdraw if anyone was in the least rude to me.

I asked for a private audience. My request was granted without the least difficulty. The following morning [5] at eleven o'clock I presented myself accompanied by a lady in waiting. I had asked Monsieur Lavallette

to act as my escort. I was ushered into the throne-room where I had so often waited in the past. Nothing had been changed. The "N's" and the eagles were everywhere. I was less troubled by so many memories than one might have thought, for then as always I was convinced that happiness was not the lot of those who dwell in palaces.

The Duchess of Devonshire [6] was ushered into the hall where I was. She asked the Duc de Gramont, who was also there, to introduce her to me and spoke to me enthusiastically about my mother, whom she would very much have liked to know. A few moments later the King received me in his study. He rose as I entered, seemed rather embarrassed, asked me to sit down beside him, and said nothing. I, with the self-confidence of a person who cannot forget who she is and what she is entitled to in spite of what anyone may do to make her forget it, opened the conversation and informed him how anxious I was to see him in order to express my thanks. The King at once recovered and was throughout agreeable and even courtly. He had been described to me as a man who was witty but hypocritical. I found him, on the contrary, frank and kindly. He expressed his regret at not having had the privilege of knowing my mother. To this I replied that he owed it to her not to forget her memory since, besides all the good she had done in France generally, she had frequently done favors for persons belonging to his family.

"I am aware of that," he replied; "at Martinique she was an excellent royalist."

Rather an odd remark to make about the wife of Emperor Napoleon! After I had told him how happy I was to live quietly in France and to bring up my children there, he suddenly asked this question: "Is it true that one day when Bonaparte was particularly well dressed and asked you what you thought of his uniform you answered, 'The sword of the Constable of France would be much more becoming to you' ?"

Astonished at this query I thought it best not to reply. As a matter of fact I had never made this remark. Formerly, owing to my preference for a quiet, calm life, I had doubtless at some time or other expressed my alarm at a rank which displeased my taste for simplicity, but to admit an impression which people might interpret as a criticism seemed to me to be disloyal toward the Empire. I sought some way of not offending an elderly man and answered: "Many words were attributed to me in the past without people taking the pains to find out whether they were true or not, but one thing is certainly true today, namely, that completely absorbed by the education of my children the only thing I desire is a retired life." [7]

He felt, I fancy, that he had made an unfortunate remark and sought to remedy it by saying a great many agreeable things. He finally rose; I did likewise. He asked permission to embrace me, kissed my hand, and added that he would always be glad to see me, whether in public or private. I answered that I considered myself an old woman who had withdrawn from society. The expression of "old woman" made him laugh. I added that I had no intention of going out in society any more, but if he wished it I should be glad to see him occasionally informally.

During the conversation he seemed to wish to have me meet other members of his family, but I did not feel that it was obligatory for me to do so. Moreover, everything that I had heard about them, their personalities, their past and their efforts to efface it did not make me at all anxious to see them. I thought that this one visit was enough.

After my reception by the King, the Duc de Gramont and the other members of court circles, some of whom I knew and some of whom were new to me, came up and asked if I had been satisfied with my reception. I replied I had every reason to be pleased, and they all conducted me back to my carriage.

When I returned home all my friends inquired if I was pleased with my interview and exclaimed, "If the King is kind to you we shall all rally to him!" The King told everyone about our conversation and praised me highly.

The friendship of the Emperor of Russia had already made me many enemies. The praises of the King completed the hostility which all the prominent people in society felt toward me. It was said that the Duchesse d'Angoulême herself did not conceal her displeasure. The favorite courtiers even went so far as to tease the King about his liking for me and the means by which I might become free to marry him.

At any rate for several days I formed the chief topic of conversation at court. Certain remarks were repeated to me. The King had said: "I never met a woman, and I I have known a great many, who was more distinguished in her bearing, more agreeable in her manners." To this the Duc de Duras replied: "It is true, Sire, she is charming. It is a pity she is so ill-advised by her friends. Her only intimates are young men who criticize your government and are your Majesty's personal enemies." Everyone was silent and the King did not continue the conversation. This was the beginning of that new life, which I intended to be so peaceful and which jealousy, a little social success, many domestic troubles were about to make so stormy.

My household consisted only of Madame de Boubers, who had returned to me after the departure of the King of Rome; Mademoiselle Courtin, a young woman I had had educated at Écouen, and Mademoiselle Cochelet, my former reader. A curious chain of circumstances had caused the latter to become the intermediary between our household and the Emperor of Russia. She wrote him and received very cordial replies. That was enough to make people think she was an important character in European diplomatic circles, and there was gossip about her and her imaginary intrigues. I had also kept with

me as gentlemen in waiting Monsieur de Marmol and Monsieur Devaux, and Abbé Bertrand for my children.

I still lived at Saint-Leu. The village priest, a kindly soul who was fond of me, informed me, when he came back from a short trip to Paris, that already I was being accused of holding secret meetings out there in the country. I could not imagine the basis for such rumors as I received only a few friends. We spent our days taking walks, drawing, playing, singing or reading, and those who came to see me immediately adopted our habits. The visitors who had never attempted to sketch before frequently furnished amusement for those who were more advanced in this art, but, one and all, they were obliged to work, and the drawing-room at times looked like a classroom, while its occupants enjoyed the simple gaiety of school children.

My husband's letter replying to the one I had written him suddenly arrived to disturb these innocent pastimes. He refused to listen to my arguments and theatened that unless my son joined him immediately he would take legal action. I found myself therefore obliged to leave the country where I had expected to stay all winter and establish myself in Paris [8] in order to secure proper legal advice. I was in despair, the more so as I was utterly ignorant about matters of this sort and did not know whom to ask about them. I was immovable only on one point, the impossibility of letting my son leave me, the wish to keep him with me at any cost.

My friends pointed out to me that in my position the scandal of a lawsuit would do me a great deal of harm, for people would exploit the slightest accusation brought against me. Then, too, it was the policy of the government to do everything it could to discredit the name I bore. Even my brother wrote me from Vienna that he and the Emperor of Russia both considered that I ought not to involve myself in such a lawsuit. I understood all their arguments. I even knew, beyond a doubt,

that the government desired to make the case sufficiently sensational to distract the public's attention from the debates in the Chamber of Deputies. But when I weighed all this against the loss of my son, and what I feared the departure would mean to him, I considered that by going into court I was making a necessary sacrifice to insure his happiness. I preferred to risk exposing myself to public censure rather than to lose my child.

I was obliged to follow blindly the advice of my lawyers, for I scarcely knew what a lawsuit was. My chief advisor was Monsieur Bonnet, and he chose as advisors Bellart, Laborie and Delacroix-Frainville. I turned over to them all my papers, all my husband's letters to me, his act of abdication, the papers which he and the Emperor had given me regarding my children, and which until then had made me their sole guardian. My heart broke every time I saw these strangers rummaging about my domestic secrets and preparing to inform the public about all those matters which my husband and I should have kept to ourselves. I wrote him again saying that in the spring I would bring my children to see him, but asking him to spare them to me for at least this winter. My husband, however, insisted that the case should come up immediately; and his agent, so proud of representing even in a minor capacity a King, although one who had been dethroned, did everything he could to embitter matters instead of trying to conciliate them. He would consent to no delay, no mutual agreement of any kind and declared that he was acting in behalf of a father. The sufferings this trial caused me are something unimaginable.

The majority of lawyers when they handle a case think primarily of themselves. They wish to attract attention and they do not sufficiently adopt their client's point of view. I had expressly ordered Monsieur Bonnet to refer to my husband only in polite terms, to remember the name I bore and wished to have respected, and especially not

to mention at any time the Emperor Napoleon except in such a manner as I might have used myself. But he paid little attention to what I said. Already he was more busy turning over in his mind some effective phrase, some witty remark which he could make during the trial, than considering my peculiar situation or studying how he could respect certain proprieties to which I attached importance. Moreover, he seemed more anxious about his own reputation than about mine.

The first newspaper article which appeared was intended to hurt my husband.[9] I was extremely sorry, and someone acting at my request undertook to have printed the next day some favorable comments on the person who had been criticized. It was amusing to think that I should be at the same time defending myself against my husband and defending him against others. Other articles appeared that made fun of both of us. In such cases I was always the more severely treated of the two. I was equally hurt by the accusation made by my husband's lawyer that I had abandoned in his hour of misfortune the man from whose rise in rank I had benefited. Such a remark addressed to me who had wasted my youth and my strength in trying to satisfy a being whose morbid temperament was dragging me to my grave![10] My conscience was too much above such accusations to be affected by them. What grieved me was they should be thus made public. Ah, how well I had chosen my motto: *Moins connue, moins troublée!* (The less known, the less criticized!) But the more I appreciated the joys of living a retired life, the more Fate seemed to upset my plans by making me the center of an agitated and troubled scene. I was told that it was absolutely necessary for me to make certain advances to the judges, and have someone who was favorable to me call on them afterwards. I could not believe this was true. It seemed that such an action would be unworthy of justice and of my cause.

Monsieur Courtin, *procureur du Roi,* who was sup-

posed to sum up the case, called on me one morning in reply to an invitation from one of my friends. What could I tell him about the case? I wished to keep my son. He knew this as well as I did. Consequently, instead of speaking of the subject he related to me, under the most formal promise of secrecy, an extraordinary investigation he had been asked to make a few days before. It seemed that a certain Monsieur de Maubreuil, after having stolen all the diamonds belonging to the Queen of Westphalia, had been arrested by request of the Emperor of Russia. The Russian minister had received orders to follow up the matter and to try to find the diamonds. The French government had been obliged to take up the investigation. At the time of his first examination Maubreuil had declared to Monsieur Courtin that during the brief period when the Provisional Government was in office the Prince of Benevento [Talleyrand] had sent for him and ordered him to assassinate all the members of Napoleon's family. Monsieur Laborie, he said, had given him further detailed instructions, and he had set out armed with full authority when a sudden thought caused him to hesitate. He was not sure whether this order included the Empress Marie Louise and her son or whether they were to be considered as belonging to the Austrian imperial family. He had feared to make a mistake and returned to ask Monsieur Laborie. Laborie had replied impatiently, "Oh, those two! Do as you please about them. The great thing is to act quickly." The *procureur du Roi* had sent a report of this examination to the government at once, in spite of the request of the Russian minister not to do so. The affair had been suppressed, and Monsieur de Maubreuil placed in prison indefinitely. I promised Monsieur Courtin not to repeat this and kept my word.

Imagine my feelings when I found myself face to face with the man whom one of his brother lawyers had chosen to defend my case, face to face with this same Laborie,

who shortly before had given orders for the murder of my entire family. I looked at him fixedly. He inspired me with pity rather than horror. I felt that in spite of the deceitfulness of his manner he must be extremely embarrassed when in my presence. What thoughts must have been his when he recalled that horrible plan!

This conversation with Monsieur Courtin left me no doubt as to the number of enemies who surrounded me and from whom the quietest, most retired life had not been able to free me. I kept daily discovering new ones. They detested me so much that they could not forgive me for having an assured position, a household and a few friends. Those who were under obligation to me were the ones who most resented my presence. They could not pardon the fact that they owed me and my family so much. They considered it a crime on my part, and consequently it was easy for them to say: "It is at her house the conspirators meet. The King and his family are insulted there. No one would think of being seen at such a place."

If the least sign of unrest appeared in some corner of France I was at once supposed to be the instigator of it. It was by remarks like this that those who were indebted to me for favors sought to pay their debts, although they might have realized that if plotting were going on, if remarks were being made about the King, my personal position was such a delicate one and my house was certainly so closely watched that it was the last spot where any political demonstration was likely to be made.

Only on one occasion, when Messieurs de Broglie, de Le Bédoyère, de Flahaut, de Ségur, Lavallette and Perregaux all happened to be calling at the same time, a discussion came up as to whether, as an appeal for those national liberties which had been promised but not granted, General Exelmans should not be advised to refuse to obey an order from the government which arbitrarily forbade his remaining in Paris. The Gen-

eral at the time was not in active service, and everyone agreed that a protest ought to be made against the order. I rose, telling these gentlemen that as the subject they were discussing was too serious for me I should leave them to continue it among themselves, and I withdrew to my apartment. The party at once broke up, and from then on no political matters were ever talked of in my presence.

When I had come to live in Paris on account of my miserable lawsuit, I had expected to receive only a few intimate friends. All this talk of conspiracies, however, made me decide to hold a reception once a week, to which I would invite some of those English people who in vain had asked to be presented to me. In admitting them to my circle I hoped they would repeat impartially what they saw going on there and consequently help make the true facts known which so many people sought to misinterpret. I was not wrong. A Mr. Bruce, a young Englishman [11] whom I had met several times and who had pleased me with his simplicity and idealism, and his accounts of the journeys he had made in Africa, happened to be at the house of the Duchesse de Mouchy. The hostess, Madame Moreau and a Lady Hamilton [12] were expressing their astonishment that the King allowed me to remain in France and described my receptions as being in reality meetings of conspirators against the government. Mr. Bruce protested violently against such statements.

"You ladies do not attend these receptions, and I have done so. I declare that it is the only house in Paris where one finds the atmosphere of a true French drawing-room, which was so justly famous throughout Europe and which no longer exists in your own country. There at least people converse without discussing politics. The topics are literature and the arts, and one never hears scandal about anybody." In this case injustice had brought me a partisan.

I had given Monsieur Boutiaguine, the Russian chargé d'affaires, permission to come to the house even when I was at home only to my intimate friends. I did not fear to have anyone see what went on there.

I avoided all arguments about political matters and was delighted to think that they were no longer any concern of mine. Yet at the same time how could I remain deaf to the complaints of Frenchmen who saw themselves humiliated in their own country while foreigners ruled in their place? All I could do was to attempt to calm their anger, but new incidents provoked fresh outbursts. The brother of the famous Georges Cadoudal [13] had just received a title. Was it possible that the Bourbons so openly admitted they were the accomplices of an assassin? Madame Moreau was authorized to assume the title of *maréchale* and her husband had died fighting against us. I was asked to recommend someone to Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo in order to obtain a post and he then made the following naive remark to me: "One cannot count on Monsieur de Blacas for anything. Would you believe it? He promised for a long time a post to a man to whom we certainly owe a favor since he helped us capture Paris, and he has not yet secured it." I could not say a word. I was dumfounded. I was ashamed at the idea of recommending a man who really deserved something to a person who dared boast to me that he was helping a traitor.

Thus my country had been enslaved. It was foreigners who made her laws. How could one blame those who were unable to forget it had been France that only yesterday had dictated to the rest of Europe? But I felt we must suppress our irritation. The thought of the hotheadedness of our young Frenchmen alarmed me. Every day they became more incensed, while I, constantly prudent, sought to use this very memory of our former grandeur to bring them back to a more reasonable state of mind. I pointed out to them that our armies had won

for the French nation the highest honors that could be attained and that a period of calm was needed properly to appreciate those honors. It was time they became acquainted with and grew to appreciate the benefits of peace, and I urged them to do so. Thus by degrees soothing the indignation the unfortunate political situation provoked I brought them to discuss subjects less perilous and more enjoyable to all. Always our amusements were the same. Billiards, music, reading aloud occupied our evenings.

I never spent an evening away from home. My drawing-room became a spot so well known and so admired on account of the distinguished people who were to be found there that this mild social success aroused other animosities against me even more to be dreaded than political enmities—those of young women, whose attacks were not limited to the field of politics.

Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur de La Bédoyère, Monsieur de Latour-Maubourg, Monsieur de Canouville, Monsieur de Lascours had been in the habit of going every evening to the house of Madame de Girardin. Madame Alfred de Noailles, one of the young women who had gone out to meet the Allies the day of the fall of Paris, also went there. She was agreeable, animated and was one of the people who contributed the most to make these evenings a success. The sort of struggle that went on between the partisans of the different political parties gave a particularly spirited tone to the conversation, and since it is always awkward to declare oneself the enemy of a pretty woman, the discussions were just violent enough to be renewed the following day. Madame de Noailles had earnestly advised these gentlemen to let bygones be bygones and to make their peace with the new court party. But her efforts had been useless. They persisted in continuing the line of conduct they had already selected. She therefore no longer attempted to persuade them but displayed her preference for the

company of young men of promise, whom she even allowed to jest at her former more old-fashioned friends, thus showing that she would rather quarrel than be bored. On my arrival from Saint-Leu all these gentlemen, who with Messieurs de Ségur, Lavallette, de Broglie, Mollien and Molé had always come to my receptions, returned to them immediately. This was doubtless the reason for which Madame Alfred de Noailles hated me cordially. I was constantly being made a target for her attacks. I am not confusing her with her cousin Madame Juste de Noailles, who was always gentle and kind. Madame Alfred de Noailles said one day in her own home in the presence of a number of people that my house served as the headquarters for a group of extremely dangerous men. She added that I stimulated their ardor, that steps should be taken to guard against the result of their conspiring, that Monsieur de La Bédoyère was an out-and-out Jacobin. In short they all had something unpleasant said about them. They heard of this from one quarter or another, Monsieur de La Bédoyère from his wife, one of whose friends was present, and I from Monsieur Boutiaguine, for members of foreign embassies were also present. My friends were furious that a young woman who had been brought up with me should try to do me such grave harm, disturb my peace of mind and endanger the health of my children by taking advantage of the delicacy of my present position. Thus undue enmity provoked excessive partisanship, and I, desiring only to be left in peace, found myself between the upper and the nether millstone. How was I to put an end to this state of things?

One day at a dinner given by Madame de Girardin my young defenders agreed not to speak to Madame Alfred de Noailles. She demanded an explanation, which no one would give her. Thus the situation became still more involved. I disapproved of this act of rudeness toward any woman. I said as much and continually tried to pour

oil on the troubled waters. It was impossible to restore peace. There was, moreover, another reason for complaint against me. The Duchesse de Mouchy, Madame de Noailles' mother, lived just across the street from me. She had a day on which she received her friends. But only a few cabs and carriages ever drove up to her door, and these were obliged to make way for the considerably larger number of vehicles which stopped in front of my house. It was out of the question for her to continue to submit to such a superiority on my part, especially as one would have expected recent events to have done away with it. It seemed difficult to accept the fact that some little of the prestige of my former rank still remained and that having in the past only been attached to my friends they should not all have abandoned me. The hostility of these ladies found it more convenient to explain this loyalty, which my misfortunes had perhaps increased, as a political cabal than to attribute it to its natural cause.

The persistent animosity this coterie displayed toward me was an example of that which many other circles manifested toward anything that belonged to the former régime. The two parties were constantly observing one another, estimating one another's strength and growing more and more actively hostile. It was the misfortune of princes summoned to reign under such conditions that they could not count on the loyalty of their subjects, and this lack of confidence caused them to take steps that still further envenomed matters. Many Chouans came up to Paris. They formed themselves into a separate regiment [14] entirely composed of former exiles whom the princes themselves protected. Several former French officers who were in need of a post attempted at once to join. Their request for admission was rejected as undesirable because they had not fought in the English Army, or in the insurrections in La Vendée or with the Prince of Condé. On being informed of this fact our

officers always went out armed. Fears, which were certainly absurd, were entertained that we were on the eve of a new Saint Bartholomew. People took precautions as though it were possible for such atrocities ever to be repeated.

Nor was the other party more reassured. The emigrants who had returned to France, and whose minds were still filled with recollections of the Revolution, imagined constantly that the army and the working classes were on the point of uniting against them. I had an indication of this in connection with an invitation I felt myself obliged to send Monsieur le Marquis de Rivière. He was aide-de-camp to the Comte d'Artois and was the only person who had not been ungrateful toward my mother; he had even renewed his expressions of gratitude to me. I sent my *valet de chambre* to invite him to dinner. Just as my servant arrived at the house of the Marquis two drunken soldiers were quarreling in the street. He knocked on the door of the apartment and heard exclamations of dismay from within. A man's voice exclaimed, "Bring me my sword." A woman answered: "No, you must not go out; I implore you, do not risk your life. Don't you hear them knocking? They have come to assassinate us." Although my servant kept calling from the other side of the door that he had only come with a dinner invitation he could not make himself understood. The commotion was so great that it was half an hour before he managed to explain. At length the door opened and revealed the wife still holding on to her husband, the husband still grasping his naked sword, and as my name, which had been pronounced several times, did not by any means reassure them, calm was not reestablished until they had fully grasped the fact that it was merely an invitation to dinner.

One day when I was even more worried than usual about the result of my lawsuit, Monsieur Fleury de Chaboulon, a young auditor whom I hardly knew, called

on me with a recommendation from the lady in waiting of one of my friends. He said to me that France had fallen so low it was impossible for a man of honor to remain there any longer, and he had therefore decided to go to Elba and take a position in the service of Emperor Napoleon. I urged him to reconsider his decision, which seemed to me to be an impulsive one, for as the Emperor had never met him he ran the risk of not proving acceptable. But he had made up his mind to carry out his plan. As long as his name would be included among those of the people who had served the Emperor he desired no other recompense or glory. He undertook to deliver various verbal messages for me, but declined to carry anything in writing. I therefore asked him to assure the Emperor of my devotion, which his misfortunes had only increased. Since I was constantly seeking means which would help me keep my children with me, and since, according to what my lawyers said, an authorization in the Emperor's handwriting approving my separation from my husband would have removed all possible obstacles, I requested Monsieur Fleury to secure this for me. In regard to any other matter about which I should have wished to communicate with the Emperor I should never have dared confide it to a man whom I scarcely knew and who might have been sent to me to lead me into a trap. This was the only Frenchman who ever set out for Elba, and I am sure he had no secret mission of any kind.

Meanwhile nothing was being done toward executing the treaty of April 11, which the King had signed. I knew that the Emperor when he left Fontainebleau had scarcely enough money with him to pay his expenses for a few months. During the few moments I had spent at Rambouillet I had seen the Empress send him a sum of, I believe, seven hundred thousand francs,[15] the rest of his personal funds having been seized and taken back to Paris. He had never thought to make any separate pro-

vision for himself, considering his lot bound up with that of France, and he had no private means of any kind. For his safety, for his personal protection even, it was absolutely necessary he maintain his body-guard. The thought that he might shortly find himself obliged to dismiss it, because the treaty he had signed was not being carried out, was painful to me. I felt myself in a way authorized by my position in France to act on his behalf; but to whom should I address myself? Who had the power to give him what he was justly entitled to?

Monsieur Pozzo di Borgo no longer came to my house. Lord Wellington was the English Ambassador in Paris. He gave brilliant entertainments, did the honors of the capital and seemed to be its ruler. He had asked through Madame Récamier to be presented to me at my home. I took advantage of this opportunity in the hope that as a generous enemy he would perhaps consider it due to his own honor to supervise the execution of treaties of which his government was one of the signatories. I received him and on another occasion asked him to dine. Beneath an exterior which at first [16] seemed to lack distinction it was easy to see that he possessed that pride so characteristically English based on a knowledge of his personal merits. He had that keenness of glance which indicates greater ability as an observer than as a creative genius, and this caused him to resemble a diplomat rather than a military leader. He spoke to me in a tone of chilly admiration regarding the Emperor's great military gifts and alluded with a touch of national pride to the obstinacy with which England had declined to recognize him. He blamed the French government for not having fulfilled the conditions stipulated in the treaty with the Emperor and assured me he would again call their attention to the sacred character of their obligations.

One evening while I was at the piano as usual word was brought me that the clerk of my municipal parish had come to announce that the following morning the gov-

ernment would take possession of all my property and attach everything I owned. I could not understand the reason for such an astounding act. He begged me to believe his personal devotion to my interests, because I had once chanced to do something for a member of his family. He wished to prove this by informing me what was to take place sufficiently in advance to give me time to remove my most precious belongings to a place of safety. He added that I could verify the truth of his statements by sending someone to the house of Cardinal Fesch where for the last two hours the officials had been engaged in placing the official seal on all the Cardinal's property. This I did and found out that the information was true. I therefore hastened to entrust my diamonds to the persons who happened to be present.[17]

This was what had become of that perfect tranquillity which I had been planning to enjoy after all the storms I had weathered. This was the liberty I had so eagerly desired. The following morning I received the official announcement that the seals were to be affixed to all the property, furniture and real estate belonging to the members of the Emperor's family. And this in spite of the treaty of April 11 which had stipulated that they could keep their property in France. The order was carried out as regards all members of the imperial family, but on my declaring that I had nothing which belonged to my husband it was admitted that I should not be included on account of the clause covering my special case.

Nevertheless all these violations of the treaty contributed to disturb my peace of mind. I began to regret the combination of circumstances which had caused me to remain in my own country and I resolved as soon as my lawsuit was over to withdraw to Prégny, a little estate I owned on the shores of Lake Geneva.

Monsieur de La Bédoyère, whom the Emperor had made colonel of an infantry regiment during the last campaign in Germany, had returned to Paris to nurse

the wound he had received at Bautzen. His mother was very anxious he should marry Mademoiselle de Chastellux, a young and pretty woman. For a long time he had refused to do so, although I also had asked him to agree and he declared he valued my advice very highly. Finally he had given in to us. I have already mentioned that I had declined the services he had come to offer me at the moment of the capitulation of Paris. Following this refusal, in spite of the attachment of his family to the Bourbons, he felt that the moment French territory had been invaded the Emperor's cause became that of the nation, and he had proceeded to Fontainebleau where he had remained till after the Emperor's departure. On his return he had not in any way expressed his adhesion to the new order, had taken no new oath of allegiance, nor sought to hide his opinions, although his regiment had been left him. He expected to be dismissed from the army. Constantly quarreling with his wife's family, he preferred to spend his evenings at my home. When I reproached him with thus deserting a young, newly married bride he told me that it was with her consent, in order to avoid disputes with his brother-in-law, and that he would be most happy to present her to me after she had had her baby. Although he never expressed it in so many words, his devotion to me and my interests, which he considered were those of his country, had remained unchanged. He went every day to court to attend my trial and came back to report to me what had taken place. The more I tried to calm his indignation against my enemies, the more he was revolted by their injustice toward me. He, like his cousin, Monsieur de Flahaut, no longer wore the Cross of the Legion of Honor. People noticed this and commented on it, attributing it to my influence. I spoke to them about it. They avowed they could no longer regard as a token of distinction a decoration now lavished on men whose only claim to it was that they had held up stage-coaches.

Monsieur de La Bédoyère, however, received an order to join his regiment stationed at Chambéry. He made various excuses for tarrying, but at length came to say good-by to me. In our conversations he had enjoyed frightening me by describing the rash resolutions he was liable to take on account of the way things were going; so one morning when I was alone he asked me, half in jest half in earnest, what I should say if I were to hear that his regiment had adopted the tricolor cockade and the eagles. Although this seemed like a jest I explained to him the nature of my fears, which he thus sought to arouse. I told him that one must always feel responsible for the result of one's actions on others and that a man would bitterly regret having committed an act which launched his country on a course that might prove fatal to her. Without listening to my reply he added: "I would not hesitate if I knew anyone skilful enough to assume the leadership of such a movement, but no one would dare do so at present. The marshals submit quietly to their country's humiliation because they are enjoying the benefits the Emperor secured for them. To be sure I know one man whom all our hopes are based on, but he holds exaggerated ideas of honor and loyalty. I had a chance to judge Prince Eugène when I acted as his aide-de-camp. He has made up his mind he will not deviate from the course he has chosen, and in order to be a great man one must take chances. The Emperor is the only one who with his genius for command could revive the sentiment of national honor, but his fate is sealed, and he is in retirement. As for me I can only recognize my humiliation."

I again did what I could to calm this state of over-excitement, and when I thought my advice had produced its result I bade him good-by.

The Duchesse de Bassano was one of my most frequent visitors. She came without her husband, who seldom went out and who perhaps would have feared arousing

the suspicions of the police if he had accompanied her more than once a month. Malicious gossip involved him with various political intrigues. Tall, beautiful, with a virginal expression, the Duchesse de Bassano had a calm and sweet face, which her happy existence had preserved and which the vivacity of her emotions rendered the more striking. She was keenly touched by our recent misfortunes and did not sufficiently conceal her grief over what had taken place.

Her husband was severely criticized. The most serious fault he was accused of was that he had had an unfortunate influence over the Emperor. People forget that a genius is his own guide. The Duke's character and gifts were of the kind which best suited the monarch who had placed confidence in him. The closer the Duke came to his master the more he was obliged to submit to the Emperor's superiority. His weaknesses were too firm an attachment to and too blind an admiration for his sovereign. His principal merit was to have loved and understood a great man.

I also saw frequently the Duchesse de Raguse. She was separated from her husband, childless, and possessed a large fortune. She could not be happy; her heart needed some outlet. She overestimated the gifts friendship has to offer and the effects of misfortune. She was loyal in her attachments and frequently cynical in her judgments. People considered her changeable and capricious, but that was because wealth cannot cure mistakes of the heart.

Monsieur Sosthènes de la Rochefoucauld, who knew my respect and esteem for all sincere opinions, even those contrary to my own cause, and who continued to come and see me in spite of political changes, explained to me his conduct in connection with what had recently taken place.

"I never served the Emperor," he said. One day he asked rather naively why so many people were dissatis-

fied. The King, he declared, had kept everyone at his post; the former army had not been destroyed; ranks and titles had been respected. He could not understand why there were so many complaints. I answered with a smile which was slightly malicious: "The officers only keep what they have earned legitimately, but you as well as many others who never went outside of Paris are now wearing the double epaulettes of a colonel. Do you think they consider this right and that they are not alarmed about what may happen in the future?"

But I listened without contradicting him when he spoke of the various members of the royal family. "As far as the King is concerned," he said, "he at least cannot be accused of not being liberal enough. His attitude must even satisfy the Jacobins." The Comte d'Artois seemed to him a true French knight, gracious in manner, witty and well-mannered. The Duchesse d'Angoulême was a masterful woman, a second Maria Theresa, whose firmness of character showed that some day she would make a great queen. The Duc d'Angoulême was shy but well-informed, and every day those who came in contact with him found that he knew more than they would have suspected. The Duc de Berry was a true Henry IV, rather frivolous, a trifle outspoken, but gallant and full of wit, which did not prevent his having a kind heart. Thus one sees those whom one loves. Might all kings inspire such sentiments!

One day he called to say good-by to me. The Duchesse d'Angoulême was leaving for Bordeaux, and he was to be allowed to accompany her. "People," he told me, "are waiting for her with the greatest impatience. All sorts of entertainments are being prepared. Enthusiasm is at its height, and I am delighted personally to participate in these demonstrations of popular rejoicings." The intensity with which he uttered the last sentence made me smile. He noticed it and inquired the reason.

"You seem to me to be very young," I answered, "since

you attach so much importance to this sort of enthusiasm. People always cheer for anything that arrives with pomp and ceremony and frequently that which the crowd has applauded one day it overthrows the next. I have seen so many of these demonstrations that I can estimate them at their just value."

Now it was his turn to smile and I readily guessed why. Therefore I added: "Ah, you think perhaps that those acclamations which I may have heard or which may have been addressed to me were perhaps paid for? The slightest incident will show you that those you consider sincere possess no more weight."

These remarks, which were entirely general and which I owed to my experiences, probably appeared to him a little later the explanation of those great events regarding which he thought I was already informed. For since I was able to judge so accurately I must have known beforehand what was going to happen. This is the way enthusiasts form their opinions, and how those who are enthusiasts are judged in turn.

The verdict which was to decide my son's fate was to be pronounced in the latter part of February. I awaited the result of the trial in a painful anxiety mingled with certain hopes due to the favorable attitude of the judges. But I heard from Monsieur Devaux that sentence had been postponed for a week.[18] This delay made me think what afterwards proved to be the case, that the government, being anxious to have my children leave France, exercised its influence in my affairs.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RETURN OF THE EMPEROR (MARCH 5–MARCH 21, 1815)

The Fifth of March, 1815—The Wife of Marshal Ney: The Emperor's Advance—The Queen Seeks Refuge with Madame Lefebre—While Paris Waits—The Emperor Enters His Capital—Hortense Is Received by Napoleon—A Great Review—At the Tuileries.

ON Monday, March 5, as I was coming back from my drive absorbed in melancholy thoughts, Lord Kinnaird [1] appeared on horseback beside my carriage and said, "Have you heard the great news, madame? Emperor Napoleon has landed at Cannes."

I was amazed. He added that he had just left the house of the Duc d'Orléans, who was leaving for Lyons whither the Comte d'Artois had preceded him, and that the court was very much excited.

My first thought was for my children. "Do you think," I asked, "that they are in any danger?"

"No, I do not think so," he answered, "although perhaps they may be held as hostages."

The idea of such a thing filled me with alarm. He, being English, feared a popular uprising against foreigners and in favor of the Emperor, and was so alarmed that I offered him and all his family my house as refuge in case such a rising took place, for I knew that I had nothing to fear from the masses.

On returning home I immediately sent my children to the apartment of one of my woman friends who was in the country, with orders not to send me word about them unless they were ill. Once this cause for anxiety was removed I felt stronger to face whatever events might take place.

It was a Monday, the day on which, as a rule, I had the most visitors. I had invited several people, among them Comtesse de Laval, who was a Russian lady by birth and friend of the Comte de Blacas. For a moment I hesitated whether I had better leave word I was not at home. I could hide nothing in regard to what was taking place. I had nothing to hide, so I preferred to show myself in order to avoid any false interpretations of my conduct. Curiosity, desire for news, general nervousness caused more people to come to see me than usual. I behaved as though I knew nothing about what had happened, and taking the cue from me no one else said a word about it either. Nevertheless, the following morning all Paris heard how my drawing-room had echoed with congratulations, how verses had been sung in honor of the Emperor and how everyone had expressed hopes for his success. People even went so far as to give the name of the author of the verses—a Monsieur Étienne, whom I had never seen and who was said to have been present at my house. To such lengths will political partizanship go. The persons who really were present did nothing to refute these tales; they knew they were false, but feared to destroy a piece of mischievous gossip which it seemed politic to encourage. Young Madame de Turpin, the wife of my mother's chamberlain, whose benefactress I had always been, said to one of my maids of honor, Madame d'Arjuzon, that people assured her seditious songs had been sung.

"But," said Madame d'Arjuzon, "you were at that reception, weren't you?"

"Yes," replied Madame Turpin.

"Well, did you hear anything?"

"No, but probably it happened after I had left."

Never had my emotions been so varied. Would the Emperor succeed? Would he fail? What fate awaited him? And also what was going to happen to France? Was it not threatened with a civil war in addition, per-

haps, to a foreign conflict? My friends who had so loudly protested against the Bourbons, were they in no danger of retaliatory measures? Then too there was the Bourbon family, who I feared might fall victims of political revenge. Everything worried me.

Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur Lavallette and the Duc de Vicence came to see me. They were equally astonished and uneasy about this unexpected event. Our habit of seeing the Emperor successful on account of his skill and bravery caused us to believe already that he had regained his throne. But what would happen next? If only he did not expect to find the French Empire just as he had left it, if only he would accept more liberal methods of government and renounce dreams of new conquests. Then too there were times when we doubted the possibility of his return. The thought occurred to me that perhaps Monsieur de La Bédoyère, obeying his mad impulses, had used the Emperor's name to provoke a rising. In any event I advised these gentlemen not to come and see me again, but to stay at home quietly so that hostile opinion might have no pretext to take steps against them.

My lawsuit was decided, and I lost my case, but I was less distressed by this on account of the great events, which led me to hope I might still keep my son with me in spite of the court's verdict.

The wife of Marshal Ney came to see me and informed me that her husband had received orders to report to his headquarters at Besançon, there to assemble his troops and march against the Emperor. She was filled with grief and lamented the Emperor's landing. It seemed as though she almost foresaw all the unhappiness that lay before her; although in view of her husband's opinion she could not at the time have supposed that the Emperor would not be the victim of this "mad adventure," as she called it. Somewhat annoyed by this expression I pointed out to her that perhaps her husband and she were mis-

taken about the state of opinion in the army and throughout the country, that the malcontents might not be less numerous than those who supported the imperial cause. As I spoke I thought of the young officers at Saverne, who, as it happened, would find themselves under the Marshal's orders, and regarding whose conduct I was not for a moment in doubt. She seemed to consider my remarks an indication of my secret hopes. She reminded me how worried we had been when war was going on and how much I valued our subsequent peace of mind.

I interrupted her, saying: "There can be no question in this case of a hope or a wish, but although I am as surprised as you are by the sudden tidings, nevertheless the success of the Emperor seems to me to be a certainty."

She doubtless repeated this conversation to her husband, who, finding out later that I had been right, thought perhaps that I had had something to do with the Emperor's return and that everything had been arranged without his knowing about it. This is what he assured all those whom he advised to act as he did.

Other persons came to me and said with apparent sincerity and in a sympathetic manner: "What a sad end for such a great man. So he has gone crazy. The idea of landing with six hundred men. Perhaps at the very moment he is being tracked down like a wild beast."

I smiled at their opinions without feeling called upon to share their pity.

Days passed. The newspapers announced that Colonel de La Bédoyère had gone over to the Emperor at the head of his entire regiment. People knew that he was one of my regular guests. Everybody's eyes were turned on me.

The Duc d'Otrante, whose house was close to mine but whom I never saw and could not like on account of his behavior at the time of my mother's divorce, asked me to receive him.

In time of danger it is well to heed everyone's advice and especially that of a man familiar with all the intrica-

cies of politics. I consequently agreed to receive him immediately. After explaining that he feared to be arrested and asking permission in case of need to be allowed to escape by way of my garden, which was next his house and had an exit on the rue Taitbout,[2] the Duke advised me to take precautions for my own safety. He assured me that I was as much in peril as he was and that I was supposed to be in touch with Elba. This led us to talk about the general state of France. He declared that he considered the Bourbon cause hopeless, as their innumerable mistakes would lead to their permanent overthrow and make people receive the Emperor with open arms. Even if there was a short civil war he would nevertheless win easily, too easily perhaps to allow conditions to be imposed on him, for he could not hope to be Emperor again as he had been in the past. The Duke said it was extremely important to know what the intentions of the Allied Monarchs were and especially those of the sovereign who had shown the most sympathy toward France. My brother at Vienna was seeing the Emperor of Russia daily. If Eugène came to Paris immediately, the Duke considered him the person who was the most likely to inspire the confidence of all political parties and whose advice would be the most useful to his country at this particular moment. The Duke asked me to convey this opinion at once to the Russian *chargé d'affaires* so that he could communicate it to his master.

While waiting what turn events would take he thought it best to go to some safe refuge. It was to facilitate such an escape that he asked for the key of my garden, which was next to his. I had it given him and I at the same time took the liberty of doing what he asked in regard to the Russian *chargé d'affaires.* I did not even stop to think over this conversation. I simply repeated it to Monsieur Boutiaguine, who asked me to make a note of our talk because he might not remember exactly the expressions used by the Duc d'Otrante. I was merely a

go-between in the matter, but without stopping to think I wrote the note Monsieur Boutiaguine asked for. Instead of copying it he sent the original to his master.

Meanwhile the Emperor had passed through Grenoble and was approaching Lyons. From every side rumors reached me that the royalist party was about to take violent measures. A prominent police official for whom my brother had formerly done a favor sent word to me that at a meeting of the King's private council a list of persons to be arrested had been drawn up. My name figured on that list. Plans were being made, so I was told, to provoke a popular insurrection against the Emperor, and the Chouans had concentrated in Paris and received money to stir up trouble. They were to seize several private mansions including that of the Duc de Rovigo. My house was next door. Consequently I was advised to leave home.

Monsieur Alexandre de Girardin, a lieutenant-general attached to the Duc de Berry, who managed to reconcile his official duties and his personal friendship for me, called to inform me, both on my behalf and on that of the family he served, of the serious accusations which were being made against me. It was openly said at court that I had pawned my diamonds and was distributing the funds thus obtained to win over the troops to the Imperial cause. On the contrary, instead of conspiring to provoke a change of dynasty I had no inclination to do anything of the kind, since my natural scruples would have prevented me from performing any hostile action toward a government to whom I was indebted for having been allowed to stay in France. Even if there had been no such moral obligation I, with my ideas regarding personal responsibility, should not have felt justified in using my influence to provoke events whose consequences I was unable to foresee. Therefore I could not believe I was in danger. Nevertheless when Monsieur Boutiaguine convinced me that I was looked on as Emperor Napo-

leon's agent in Paris, that I was no longer safe there, and when all those about me also urged me to escape, I finally made up my mind to leave home.

I did so one morning [March 11, 1815]. I wore a hat and coat belonging to Mademoiselle Cochelet, and the better to make it appear that I was she, I took the arm of her brother instead of that of Monsieur Devaux, an elderly man who acted as my equerry. At the door and as we turned the corner of the rue Cerutti I put my head down to escape the glances of the police spies who were already stationed there. They looked at me curiously but made no attempt to follow us. I should have been extremely nervous. Not at all. The embarrassment of finding myself for the first time in my life walking about the streets alone with a man was more on my mind than any thought of danger. Fortunately it was raining, and our umbrella still further helped conceal my face. My guide was no less alarmed than I. He was particularly nervous on account of my dress trimmed with lace, which I had not had the time to change and which the coat did not completely conceal. He was worried every step of the way, which seemed to me a long one, for fear of my being recognized. Finally I reached the rue Duphot at the corner of the boulevard. Without anyone catching sight of me I slipped up to the third floor and sought refuge with Madame Lefebvre, an old servant of my brother, who had accompanied my mother when she came from Martinique. She eloquently expressed her joy at seeing me and at being able to be useful to me. In her apartment I suddenly found myself back again in a familiar setting, surrounded by family portraits and a quantity of little objects which had belonged to my brother and me when we were children and which Madame Lefebvre had preciously treasured ever since. Her husband placed his room at my disposal.

Having thus taken refuge in a profound isolation and being able to reflect at length on what was happening, I

QUEEN HORTENSE
Miniature Painted by Herself from the Collection of Prince Napoleon

discovered I was chiefly annoyed by the rôle which malicious gossip was attributing to me. People said that I went about among the troops, visiting the barracks and distributing money to the soldiers. This seemed so little like me that I decided to write to Monsieur d'André, chief of police, in order to refute these absurd rumors, of whose falseness he must be better aware than anyone else. I added that no matter what the future might hold in store for me or for my children my character was such that I could never play any active part in public life, but could only passively submit to the course of events.

This letter was shown to the King. But as fear makes us suspicious and as the progress of the Emperor became constantly more and more swift, hostility toward me steadily increased.

Meanwhile every morning the newspapers informed me that the decisive moment was approaching. All eyes were fixed on the military leaders. Four thousand men had entered Soissons crying, "Long live the Emperor!"

I heard later that for several months all sorts of conspiracies had been afoot. Even in the army officers were becoming discontented with the marshals and the new leaders. Generals Lallemand and Lefebvre-Desnoëttes had prepared a revolt quite independent of the Emperor's return.[3] If he had not disembarked at Cannes when he did, the Bourbons would have been overthrown even without his arrival. The landing of the Emperor merely turned popular feeling in a new direction. For instance, when he heard of it General Lefebvre-Desnoëttes set out to join him at the head of his troops, declaring he was leading back the Old Guard to its former commander. The two generals Lallemand [who were brothers] had also prepared to march on Paris and were only stopped a short distance from the capital by Colonel de Talhouët. The latter refused to order his regiment to take up arms against the King, and his action upset the plans of the leaders of the undertaking.

The Lallemand brothers were captured and General Lefebvre-Desnoëttes managed to hide. This slight success encouraged the royalist party. A camp was formed at Melun, commanded by Monsieur le Duc de Berry. A royalist volunteer corps was organized, and men of all ages came to enlist.

From my window I could watch the boulevard and the sight was a curious one. Sometimes groups of volunteers marched past, the volunteers consisting of young enthusiasts and old supporters of the royal cause, the former arrogant and proud, the latter already dragging along under the weight of the equipment. Both were equally inexperienced, both equally full of ardor and both shouting, "Long live the King!" They would be followed by a cavalry regiment of the old army, whose horsemen sat motionless amid the turmoil, unmoved by the demonstrations in which the crowd sought to make them share. They seemed to disdain these empty cheers, preoccupied by the thought of the man against whom they were about to fight rather than by that of the one whose cause they were to defend. Meanwhile the crowd, as if it were at a play, waited eagerly for the outcome of all these events, but was well aware that it would shortly be acclaiming whichever of the two adversaries was victorious.

It happened that the apartment next to mine was occupied by one of the heads of the Chouans. All day unprepossessing-looking men came to see him and seemed to be receiving money and taking orders. An old woman who was in her room heard what they said and assured Madame Lefebvre that they were all connected with the police spy-service and that she had heard money and weapons being distributed.

This of course increased Madame Lefebvre's fears for my safety. She begged me not to show myself at the window, because opposite there lived a painter who held extremely royalist ideas, and upstairs was the family of a member of the King's body-guard. Certain anonymous

letters sent me to my home announced that two hundred Chouans were going to meet the Emperor disguised as deserting troops and that they were planning to murder him. I trembled; but how was I to warn him?

Monsieur Devaux came one evening to give me news of what was happening to my friends. All those who were known to be Bonapartists had already gone into hiding. The Duc de Vicence had sought refuge with an old cook, Monsieur de Flahaut at the house of Monsieur Alexandre de Girardin and Monsieur Lavallette in my house.[4] Surprised at the spot the latter had chosen as a hiding-place I was told that it had seemed a particularly safe spot since I had left. Moreover, he was taking all sorts of precautionary measures such as arranging a secret cupboard in the attic and wearing the wig of my steward by way of disguise. This sometimes resulted in rather amusing scenes, which lightened the atmosphere of my home while I was away.

The Duc d'Otrante, who was arrested, as he had expected, found an excuse to slip away from the police officers when they had already taken him into custody. By means of a ladder he climbed the wall into my garden. Having in his nervousness forgotten the key of the little gate, he broke the lock with a stone and left the door open. The police were so surprised not to find any trace of him in his own house, in spite of their search, that it was rumored there were secret passages between it and mine. The Duc d'Otrante has since told me that the night before he had come to ask me to facilitate his escape and talk about my brother, he had had a long talk with the Comte d'Artois. The latter had begged him on behalf of the King to assume the post of chief of police with unlimited powers, but the Duke refused, saying it was too late, that it was no longer possible to save their dynasty. This refusal was doubtless, as he suspected, the reason for his arrest.[5]

I wrote Madame Du Cayla to find out what was hap-

pening to Monsieur Sosthènes de La Rochefoucauld, who was liable to expose himself unduly on account of his great admiration for the royalist cause. He was at Bordeaux with the Duchesse d'Angoulême, who displayed a strength of character worthy of her rank.

One evening I was told that a mail-carrier, the father-in-law of Vincent Rousseau, my *valet de chambre,* had just arrived from Lyons where he had witnessed the Emperor's entry into the city. An immense throng intoxicated with the joy of again catching sight of him had cheered him loudly. King Louis XVIII sent for this messenger and inquired if he had seen Bonaparte. The messenger replied quite frankly that he had seen him at Lyons surrounded by a crowd of people who kissed his uniform and whose enthusiasm was boundless. He added, "I must say, Sire, that your nobility were far from brave. I saw your brother come back with two gendarmes. Everybody else had abandoned him." The courtiers hastened to silence him, while the King, quite overcome, hid his face in his hands. The messenger having been dismissed, the chief of police sent for him and forbade him to tell what he had seen at Lyons or even to leave his home. But the messenger told everything to his daughter, who came to impart it to her husband. Monsieur Lavallette forbade Vincent Rousseau to go to see his father-in-law, fearing that he and my other servants might be suspected if it was discovered they were in touch with a government dispatch-bearer.

During the few days I had spent in the house things began to seem very tedious to me, and in spite of my old servant's warnings I could not resist standing by the window to breathe a little fresh air. On the morning of March 20 I caught sight of the youthful members of the King's body-guard, who had looked so fiery a short time before, looking downcast as they bade sad farewells to the members of their grief-stricken family. The painter who lived across the street appeared at his window with

very preoccupied air. The huge white ribbon [white being the color of the Bourbons] with which he adorned his buttonhole had disappeared. Armed with a feather-duster he was busy removing the dust from a life-size portrait of one of the Emperor's ministers. I thought I recognized the likeness as that of Monsieur de Montalivet. The painter's wife, thin and nervous, appeared to be arguing with him vigorously, in a state of great excitement. All these changes made me feel that still others had occurred elsewhere in the capital. I was impatient to hear the news when Monsieur Devaux arrived and told me that the King had left hastily during the night [6] upon hearing that Marshal Ney and his army corps had gone over to the Emperor. Monsieur Devaux had heard of this departure from one of the men who cleaned the floors of his house; this man was the uncle of a dancer at the Opera [named Virginie], the mistress of the Duc de Berry. During the night of March 19 the prince had come to say good-by because the young dancer had just had a child. He told her in the presence of her family, whom he urged to take good care of her, "We must separate forever. We have lost everything, no hope remains."

I wished to return home immediately, but Monsieur Devaux pointed out that hordes of people without any clearly defined means of livelihood were pouring into Paris, and might the more easily commit excesses of all kinds since the Bourbons had left the capital without any commander or anyone in authority to keep order.

Does it seem possible? In spite of the various emotions which had preyed upon me during the last few days I still was sentimental enough to care about what became of this family who were thus, after a brief return home, once more driven into exile. They must be suffering all those painful sensations which I had a short time before experienced myself, and this idea caused me to feel a sincere sympathy for them. The Orléans family were those

for whom I felt the most sorry. Without knowing any of them personally, their affable behavior, their highly respectable domestic life had charmed those who had come in contact with them, and the sentiment had communicated itself to me. I recalled that the Duke had received my brother kindly, and in this critical moment when it was possible that the masses might commit some act of violence against them I who had nothing to fear from the mob, would have been glad to be useful to them if the opportunity had presented itself. A few days before, prompted by this feeling, I had sent word to one of my maids, who had been also employed by Mademoiselle d'Orléans [the sister of Louis-Philippe], placing my services at their disposal. Should they feel that either they themselves or any of their children were in danger I urged them to trust me implicitly. My maid Madame Charles went to deliver my message and came back saying she had not ventured to do so.

"Alas," she added, "how could I utter your name when Mademoiselle d'Orléans on catching sight of me exclaimed, 'We are obliged to leave again and it is that Duchesse de Saint-Leu who has caused our ruin' ?" [7]

In a moment that was such a critical one for the King I remembered only the friendly manner in which he had received me, and I thought that at a time when everyone was deserting him it would be agreeable to him to hear I still recalled his kindness toward me. I wrote him and repeated the expression of my thanks, giving the letter to Monsieur de Lascours, an officer of his body-guard who was to join him abroad.

Monsieur Devaux came back at three o'clock and said that in all probability the Emperor would enter Paris that same day. He had with him a letter which the Duc d'Otrante wished me to forward to the Emperor, it being important, so he said, that the Emperor receive it before entering the city. I believe it was to warn the Emperor to be on his guard against the Chouans in dis-

guise who were planning to assassinate him. My *valet de chambre* Rousseau left at once with it.

Nothing surprised me so much on my way home as to see along the boulevards how all the shopkeepers were busy changing or turning around their signs. The eagles and the bees were taking the place of the lilies and fortunately this change was the only indication of the great events that had taken place.

Perhaps the most amazing, miraculous and unheard-of thing of all was the Emperor's march from Cannes to Paris. When he came up to the outpost of the first regiment which had been dispatched from Grenoble to attack him the Emperor dismounted, stepped forward alone and said to the nearest soldier, "Do you recognize me? Would you dare fire at your general?" Cries of "Long live the Emperor!" were the reply and this body of troops joined his force. A short time later Colonel de La Bédoyère brought over his regiment and opened the gates of Grenoble. From then on as far as Paris the Emperor traveled in a little carriage almost without any escort. As soon as he caught sight of a regiment marching toward him he would quietly get out, walk forward to meet it, and review it as he had done in the past. This confidence in the troops conquered them immediately. At first they were astonished; then they became enthusiastic and gave way to their emotion until it seemed to him and to other observers that he had never ceased to be the Emperor of the French.

My *valet de chambre* met the Emperor near Essonnes, just as he was changing horses, and found the escort so small that he could not realize that this was he. Having delivered the letter he returned to report that so many country folk were hurrying up from all sides to see the Emperor pass and so many Parisians were going out to meet him that he had been obliged to come back at a snail's pace. Everywhere the enthusiasm was intense.

The troops who had concentrated at the camp at Melun

and who had taken their places along the Essonnes road shouted, "Long live the Emperor!" as soon as they caught sight of him, and certain generals who till then had been rather undecided allowed themselves to be carried away by the impetus of the crowd in spite of the opinions they had held the day before. They have since declared, "The princes were not there; what could we do?"

The Emperor's former aides-de-camp as well as the Duc de Vicence had left the morning of March 20 to meet him and had joined him at Essonnes. He embraced them all and had the Duc de Vicence step into his carriage where there already were General Drouot and General Bertrand.

An officer of the National Guard came at seven o'clock in the evening to invite me to go to the Tuileries to await the arrival of the Emperor. The officer was sent by the former cabinet ministers. Crowds surrounded the palace. The sight of my carriage caused much cheering. The sentries belonging to the National Guard were turned out and they saluted as I arrived. They cheered so loudly that I thought it must be the Emperor who was approaching. When I discovered that the demonstration was in my honor I could not help smiling, for I remembered that a few days before I had passed this same spot quite unrecognized by the men on duty. How quickly things change!

I found many officers and ladies assembled in the apartments of the former cabinet ministers. Among the ladies were the Duchesse de Bassano, Duchesse de Frioul, Duchesse d'Istrie, Duchesse de Rovigo, Madame Gazzani [8] and Madame Lallemand. Queen Julie [wife of Napoleon's brother Joseph, King of Spain], who happened to be in Paris seeking to regain possession of her estate of Mortefontaine, which had been sequestrated, arrived a moment after I did. The renewed cheering that greeted her made us again imagine it was the Emperor. Night had fallen. The crowd withdrew. People

did not believe he would arrive till the next day. Had he postponed his entry till then his reception would have been a real triumph, but he never on any occasion made a formal state entry into Paris. He always returned to his palace after dark. It was not till the next morning that his arrival was announced. Perhaps in this particular instance he wished to return on March 20, the anniversary of his son's birth. The royalists declared it was fear of the attitude of the Parisians which delayed him, and that he did not arrive till after dark intentionally.

Finally at nine o'clock he drove up into the court of the Tuileries, just twenty days after he had landed on French soil. He had not encountered the least resistance anywhere and had only stopped long enough to change horses and review the different troops. His carriage stopped at the entrance to his ordinary apartment.[9] We went to meet him, and for a few moments he was in actual danger so great was the eagerness with which people pressed forward, seized by an intoxication which it is difficult to explain. We could scarcely manage to withdraw from the crowd in order to avoid being suffocated ourselves. As we did so we saw him caught up by a thousand arms and carried in triumphantly to his own apartments. When he arrived there were only two of his former aides-de-camp beside his carriage. The others reached Paris later.

When the first movement of joy and enthusiasm had passed, my friends managed to make a path for me through the crowd, and I was able to enter his drawing-room with the other ladies. I stepped forward to embrace him accompanied by Queen Julie. He received me rather coldly and asked my sister-in-law, "How does it happen you are here?" I noticed he embraced all the other ladies more warmly than he did us. He greeted all the men in a most cordial manner, especially Prince of Eckmühl [General Davout, with whom Napoleon had

won the battle of Eckmühl in 1809]. Madame Lallemand asked for and obtained immediately the release of her husband, who had been sentenced to death on account of having headed a mutiny. The Emperor asked her various questions about this incident which he had heard about only vaguely in the recent newspapers. It was announced that supper was ready and he went in, passing us without a word. Queen Julie and I were alone in the drawing-room speaking of the cold reception which we had received when I heard a noise in the Emperor's study. I went to see what it was. To my extreme surprise I discovered there the young accountant Fleury de Chaboulon who had left a few months before to go to Elba. He told me he had arrived at the Tuileries just after the Emperor to whose cabinet he was attached. It seemed that an illness had prevented his reaching Elba before the end of February. On his arrival the Emperor had asked a great many questions regarding conditions in France and he was quite sure it was his account that had made the Emperor decide to land so quickly although the Emperor had never said a word to this effect. On the contrary, having returned by way of Italy to do certain things for the Emperor, he was amazed on arriving at Lyons to find his master there. The latter had allowed him to come to Paris in one of his carriages. Thus no one in France could have received word of this return for the only [10] man who went to Elba arrived in France after the Emperor did. I asked Monsieur Fleury de Chaboulon if the Emperor had spoken about me and what he had said. His reply was that he had scarcely mentioned me as the Emperor had appeared so indignant at my having remained in France that he had not dared deliver my message to him.

I returned to the drawing-room. The Emperor came in a few minutes later and stepped up to me.

"Where are your children?" he said.

"Sire, existing conditions obliged me to send them

away from home. I ask your permission to bring them to you tomorrow."

"I see by the papers," he went on, "that you lost your case. I was sure you would. Everything depends on paternal authority."

Then he went into his study where he received all his ministers one after another. This took so long that we decided to withdraw, although we had not yet made our farewells. The Duc de Vicence, as we went out, told me he had taken my part, that people had tried to do me much harm at Elba by false reports about me and that the Emperor, greatly annoyed, did not wish to receive me at all. The Duke told me that he himself had done everything he could to modify this attitude. He advised me to come the next day with my children. I did so and arrived very early.

An enormous crowd already filled the garden. Officers of all branches of the service and every rank crowded about the courtyards and the stairways. Never had I seen such enthusiasm. People are always willing to applaud anything that arouses their astonishment, but this event had something superhuman about it which stirred even the least interested observer. Such was the prestige which everyone felt obliged to accord the man who had shown himself so far above ordinary beings by his personal character and by his career.

My heart beat violently when I entered the Emperor's drawing-room. He was alone near the open window, returning the acclamations of the people which filled the air. He received me coldly, embraced my children, inquired with interest about their health, after which we walked about for a few minutes without saying anything while my children watched the crowds that thronged the gardens. Every time we approached the window the cheers increased. In vain I sought to remain in the background; I was so conspicuous that the next day the newspapers stated that the Emperor had called the

crowd's attention to me and my children, an account which was altogether inaccurate as, on the contrary, he still seemed angry with me.

Finally he broke the silence and said, "I would never have thought you would forsake my cause."

"Forsake your cause, Sire? Would I, or even could I have done such a thing?"

"You had no right to dispose of the future of my nephews without my permission. Your husband was right to be distressed by such behavior."

"Sire, you do not know the reasons which made me remain in France. My mother wished me to do so. I was all she had left. My husband as you know offered me no support. His advice could not inspire me with any confidence. Where was I to go?"

"With your brother."

"But he had no situation of his own as yet. He had gone to ask for one at Vienna."

"You could have gone and demanded one also."

"Do you think I should have been allowed to do so? The Emperor of Russia proved a generous foe. He wished to assure my children's future. Could I possibly have refused him? Did anyone decline the Duchy of Parma which was offered your son?"

"That was quite different. That insured his independence."

"Your son, Sire, had lost more than mine. He had lost the throne of France. People considered he was fortunate in securing even so small a compensation as the Duchy of Parma. Should I have refused for my sons, who were only princes, a compensation, which doubtless was still less important in itself, but nevertheless was more so in proportion to their position?"

"What does that matter? You had no business to stay in France. A piece of bread by the roadside would have been preferable. Moreover, don't imagine that your children would have been benefited by these so-called gifts.

They would have been got rid of. You behaved like a child yourself. When one has shared a family's rise in rank one must share its misfortunes."

On receiving this reproof, which I so little deserved but which my having remained in France seemed partly to justify, I could not restrain my tears. "Ah, Sire, how greatly I have been mistaken! I thought I was doing my duty in keeping your nephews from going into a foreign country. I could not write you. I vainly attempted to do so. I hoped you would be pleased that at any rate they remained on French soil in the midst of their countrymen. Where were there any friends to whose care I could have confided them?"

Touched by my grief, the Emperor said to me in a milder tone: "Now then, now then, you have not a single good excuse to make, but you know I am a good father and shall forgive you willingly. Let us not speak of it any more. Besides, I know how well you behaved while living in France."

I wished to go into details regarding my lawsuit and explain that I had been obliged to defend my case but he said, "Oh, about that matter, you are a mother! That explains everything."

Admiral Ver Huell was announced. The Emperor advanced to meet him and said with emotion: "Come here, Admiral, let me embrace you. I am delighted to see a hero again. If everyone had behaved as you did all those misfortunes would not have taken place." [11]

The Admiral, deeply moved, could not reply. Both men had tears in their eyes. I was delighted to see such well-deserved praise being given to one of my friends.

Monsieur le Comte de Molé was admitted. He came to thank the Emperor for his kindness but requested he only be appointed head of the Department of Roads and Bridges, not feeling qualified to accept the cabinet post the Emperor had offered him. When alone with me the Emperor inquired, "Has Molé changed toward me?"

"I do not think so. He continued to come and see me although less frequently."

"The reason I wonder about it," continued the Emperor, "is that I wished to make him Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he declined the post."

"Do you mean, Sire, that you were not going to appoint the Duc de Vicence? Everyone is aware how much he has always done to prevent hostilities, and France needs peace so much."

"He is too fond of foreigners."

"But, Sire, you must convince foreigners that you wish for peace. His nomination would be a guarantee of your intentions."

"So that is how it is, you are playing politics nowadays." Saying this, he pinched my ear. He went on to speak of my mother, of her death and of the grief it had caused him.

"I certainly intend to have her brought to Saint Denis, but quietly and not just yet. There have been so many of those mournful ceremonies that the nation must be tired of them. Is your brother in Vienna? I hope he is still devoted to France. I am counting on him absolutely. I wrote him from Lyons. The allied kings would have done nothing for him. He should be in France." I assured the Emperor of my brother's loyalty. He dismissed me, saying that whenever I wished to see him he would always receive me after his dinner in the evening. Having said this, he went down the main stairway in order to review the troops massed in the Carrousel.

My children insisted so on seeing the parade that I agreed. Going through the private apartments I met the Duc de Vicence, who told me the Emperor had proposed to him the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs but he had refused and recommended Monsieur Molé. I pointed out to him all the consequences of this refusal. "People know that you are the only man who has constantly advised the Emperor to make peace. Your advice

is now more necessary than it has ever been before. You must intervene and bring all your influence to bear against his plans for new conquests."

"I entirely agree with you, Madame. But what can I do if the Emperor has not changed and if he begins by wanting to reconquer Belgium?"

"My God!" I exclaimed. "Has he already begun to speak about that?"

"No, but what alarms me is that he should have been received so enthusiastically. A little resistance would have proved more valuable. How can you expect a man not to believe that he can accomplish everything, and even to attempt it after he has met with such a welcome? Then, too, will the foreign powers be willing to discuss terms of peace? That is the great problem."

"Remember," I said, "our conversations with the Emperor of Russia, how anxious he was to put an end to all this bloodshed and never to oppose the wishes of the French people. I have no doubt he will understand just as we do that this return is in accordance with the wishes of the immense majority of the French, and consequently he will not seek to oppose our national aspirations. To do so, would be entirely contrary to his principles and the magnanimous attitude he displayed. Thus it is the patriotic pride of Emperor Napoleon that most alarms me at present. May all those about him do their best to make him realize the necessity of peace."

"That is doubtless true," replied the Duc de Vicence. "But does it depend only on him? Is Emperor Alexander entirely free from passions of his own?" [12]

I have attended many solemn military displays but never one that equaled the spectacle presented by this first review. The great Place du Carrousel, all the neighboring streets, the houses, the roofs, the scaffoldings were covered with an innumerable throng. Their frantic cheers were echoed by the cries of "Long live the Emperor!" which the soldiers of all regiments, officers of all

branches of the service uttered, as they waved their helmets and caps at the ends of their muskets and swords. I remembered having seen the crowds at the height of the Empire, carried away with joy. On this occasion they were simply mad. Only the battalion from Elba remained calm and silent. With a noble pride it seemed to accept its share in the popular rejoicings. The martial faces of these grenadiers, browned by the southern sun, their clothes still covered with dust, distinguished them from all the rest.

They had arrived at three o'clock in the morning in the courtyard of the Carrousel and they had bivouacked there with a party of the 7th Regiment commanded by Monsieur de La Bédoyère. They had marched thirty-five miles in order to catch up with the Emperor, having heard rumors of the disguised Chouans who were to have attacked him.

When I came home at five o'clock I found General de Girardin there. He told me he had gone to the camp of Melun decided to do his duty in favor of the Bourbons, but that the place had been in the greatest confusion with no one to take command, and all the troops had followed the general movement and gone over to the Emperor.

Colonel de La Bédoyère arrived just as I was going in to dinner. I asked him to stay and dine with me and at the same time relate all the circumstances of his surrender to the Emperor. He told me that when he rejoined his regiment he had not the slightest idea that the Emperor was about to land, that he could not explain the return except as being due to the Emperor's desire to free his country from the state of humiliation into which it had fallen. He himself as soon as he heard the news believed that his country could be saved, and he had left Chambéry with the firm intention of helping the Emperor's enterprise as soon as he could do so. On arriving at Grenoble Monsieur de La Bédoyère, in spite of the orders issued by his general to disperse his regiment in

different parts of the town, massed it in the central square and having harangued it, being sure his troops would follow him, he led them out to meet the Emperor. He encountered him about nine miles from Grenoble. The Emperor came toward him, embraced him and handed him the insignia which he had on his own hat. They discussed at length the situation in France. Monsieur de La Bédoyère took advantage of this opportunity to say, "Sire, your only hope of continuing to govern France is to adopt liberal ideas."

"Do you think I am afraid of such ideas?" replied the Emperor. "After a revolution such as it has experienced France, with all the political passions still at boiling-point and all class-interests on edge, needs a firm hand to govern her. I, and I alone, can give the people that liberty to which they are justly entitled. Everything that has taken place this last year has shown me what their true wishes and desires are. The hopes they place in me shall not be disappointed."

Having said this, Monsieur de La Bédoyère added emphatically: "Ah, madame, if France is to regain her independence, if the Emperor will provide her with a liberal constitution, if personal liberty is assured and the national laws are properly enforced, I shall be satisfied, because I shall feel that I have contributed something to my country's salvation."

Everything about him indicated a strong and loyal character. When the Emperor wished to make him general after he had rallied to the imperial cause, and when General Drouot was sent to announce this appointment to him he replied: "Tell the Emperor that I am not seeking any reward. If I accept anything people will say I have been acting from motives of personal ambition. Such a sentiment is beneath me." In fact, he told me several times that he intended to resign from the army and that if he remained in active service it was simply because he was anxious to do his share in defending his country,

along with all other Frenchmen. If it had not been for this he would even have refused to be the Emperor's aide-de-camp, for he detested the etiquette of the court. During peace-times the only thing he was interested in was his home-life and he tried to make his wife forgive him for the part he had played in the recent events. She had withdrawn to the country with her mother, Madame de Chastellux, and refused to see her husband again, because he had forsaken everything for a cause which she refused to accept. As a matter of fact both their families were devoted to the Bourbons. Madame de La Bédoyère had just recovered the large estates which had previously belonged to them. Consequently no one lost more than her husband by the Emperor's return, but the more completely he had overlooked this the prouder he was to have done so. Who could help admiring such a character?

After dinner I returned to the Tuileries. The Duc de Vicence had accepted the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Duc d'Otrante had been made chief of police.

The Duc de Bassano was still particularly popular with the Emperor, who had dined alone with him. There were a number of people in the drawing-room when I entered. Several ladies arrived later.

The Emperor chatted informally with everyone. He gave some details in regard to his life on Elba. He mentioned what a consolation it had been for him to have his mother and his sister Pauline there and how much he had enjoyed the quietness of the island. He conducted his household economically, but it cost him a good deal to keep up his guard, and he had begun to fear that he would have to dismiss it, although several Genoese had often offered to loan him money, fearing he might need some. Someone asked what had given him the idea of returning to France.

He replied: "It was the newspapers. For a long time

I did not receive any, and then twenty or more came all at once. I saw that attempts were being made to slander the army and to speak contemptuously of its former successes, while promotions and honors were being handed out to men who had never been under fire. Then too the purchasers of public property were being annoyed, and the important influence the priests were exercising must have made people fear the return of the tithing system. I was sure that if I managed to land in France I should be hailed as a liberator. I was convinced that those who had so long been obliged to undergo hardships would employ all possible means to revive former customs and to undo the work the Revolution had accomplished, but I admit I did not think they would set to work so quickly. I thought Louis XVIII cleverer than he turned out to be. The masses seem very incensed against the poor priests," he added, "for everywhere the peasants, when they come to cheer my carriage, cry also *'A bas les calotins!'* ['Down with the church party.']"

The Duc de Bassano replied that in many districts and families the priests had sought to establish a kind of inquisition in regard to personal opinions, the country folk had been alarmed at the return of the tithing system and, moreover, so many gloomy ceremonies had depressed everyone.

It was already late. The Emperor retired, and I too went home in great need of some rest.

Just as I was going to bed word came that my brother's steward was sending him a special messenger to Vienna to inform him of the events that had taken place and I was asked if I had any special messages for him. I hastily scribbled a few lines. I mentioned the Emperor's rather cold reception of me, the general enthusiasm, and expressed the hope of seeing my brother again shortly. I had very little to say about political matters as I believed he would come back with the Empress and the King of Rome. In my letter I did not forget to refer to my

earnest hope for peace, which formed the most important object of my thoughts. I had so much enjoyed this year of mental repose that no other form of happiness seemed to me comparable with that freedom from all anxieties. I urged my brother not to neglect any means of persuading the Emperor Alexander to sacrifice his personal animosity for fear of causing a war which to judge by the enthusiasm of the French nation would be sanguinary and long drawn out.

CHAPTER XV

THE HUNDRED DAYS (MARCH 22–JUNE 10, 1815)

A Letter from Marie Louise—At Court—How Hortense Helped Napoleon—Public Opinion—Luncheon at Malmaison—Madame Bertrand—Anecdoes About Elba—Napoleon's Mother—Rumors of a Divorce Between Louis Bonaparte and Hortense—Preparing for War—The Champ-de-Mars.

THE following morning [March 22, 1815] the Duc de Vicence called. He asked me to write Empress Marie Louise on behalf of the Emperor who wished me to describe in detail his return and the welcome he had received, and to say how glad he would be to see her again. I hastened to do as the Emperor requested. I so wrongly judged what the attitude of the Foreign Powers would be toward the Emperor that I told the messenger to proceed directly to Vienna and deliver my letter to the Empress. I felt sure that on the way he would meet my brother returning to Paris. How grievously I was mistaken! My letters were seized, opened and criticized.[1] People reading between the lines discovered traces of diplomatic maneuvers and dangerous insinuations. This interpretation nearly did my brother serious injury as there was talk of imprisoning him in the Austrian citadel. He retained his liberty thanks only to the intervention of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Bavaria and after he had given his word to remain neutral. When sometime afterwards the Emperor informed me that my messenger had been captured, I seemed so surprised that he said to me, "What in the world did you put in your letter?"

"Only what was taking place, Sire," I replied, "but I am the more annoyed because I spoke of family matters.

I admit I am still childish enough not to be willing to believe people can take a letter and open it when it is addressed to someone else."

The Emperor laughed.

The same day I sent off my messenger, the Russian envoy Monsieur Boutiaguine sent to ask if I had any messages to deliver abroad. He like the other foreign envoys had been for a moment afraid they would be held as prisoners. The King had informed them that he was going to remain and then left so hurriedly that none of them had received word of his departure. The Emperor provided passports for all of them. The Duc de Vicence made a present to Monsieur Boutiaguine of the treaty found in the papers of Louis XVIII, according to which England, France and Austria were to form a coalition against Russia and Prussia. Monsieur Boutiaguine told me that he doubted if his master would even consent to recognize Emperor Napoleon, because one could not have confidence in his promises. I spoke to him about the Emperor's unexpected return, which, as he was well aware, was not the result of any carefully laid plan, and said to him: "You have seen for yourself the popular enthusiasm. The wishes of the country are clearly evident. If Emperor Napoleon wishes to make war he will speedily lose the support of the French nation because everyone wants peace. He is too wise and far-seeing not to accept the verdict of an entire nation. Thus if war does break out it will be because of the Emperor of Russia's attitude, and I dislike the thought that he could ever be responsible for such a misfortune."

Monsieur Boutiaguine was leaving for Vienna, and I gave him a letter for the Emperor of Russia expressing my hopes for peace.

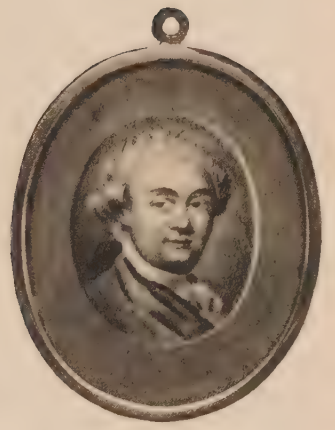
The Emperor worked constantly. He spent part of the mornings reviewing the troops that kept arriving from all over France. He generally dined alone at nine o'clock, but after his return he formed the habit of in-

MINIATURES OF MEMBERS

The Three Sons of Queen Hortense

Hortense
Louis Bonaparte

Napoleon Louis
Napoleon Charles



OF QUEEN HORTENSE'S FAMILY

Napoleon

Madame Mere
Napoleon Louis & Napoleon Charles

Josephine
Vicomte de Beauharnais

viting a few guests. All the generals and their wives dined with him in succession. I would come in about half past nine and go into the dining-room, although they were still at table. The Emperor was told certain curious particulars about the way in which the King and the princes lived. They were very anxious to revive old customs which had fallen into disuse, among others that of having religious processions go through the streets on Sundays and other feast days. The Emperor's comment was that the French would never become accustomed to such old-fashioned traditions. General Albert described one day how the Duc d'Orléans on leaving for Lille saw people putting on the tricolor cockade and exclaimed, "How happy I should be if I too could wear that emblem."

"Ah, if *he* had been king," replied Emperor Napoleon, "I might never have come back, for he would not have made so many mistakes."

Another time, when he had opened a letter from the Duchesse d'Angoulême to the King, who she believed was still in Paris, in which she made certain suggestions and described what she was doing to keep Bordeaux loyal to the royal cause, the Emperor said, "She is the only man in the family."

He expressed his surprise that a woman who deserved so much sympathy on account of her misfortunes had not more thoroughly won the hearts of the French. He was told that she was vindictive. I noticed that the persons who formerly had been most assiduous in their attention to the King and the princes were the first afterwards to make fun of them, just as those who apparently had been the most devoted to Emperor Napoleon had, when he left for Elba, been those who applied the most insulting epithets to him. This sad insight into human nature taught me to judge it severely, but it also saddened me and made me regret my solitude.

Life at court during this period was a curious one.

Watching it one was able to surmise how much confidence rulers should place in the affection and loyalty of their subjects. A large number of the most devout royalists, believing the cause of the King to be irretrievably lost, already sought to be forgiven and to explain their previous attitude by expressing their violent admiration for the Emperor. Around him hovered constantly members of both legislative bodies, the chamberlains, the equerries, generals and judges, including those who had most severely condemned him in the past. They eagerly sought his favors and proclaimed how fortunate France was still to possess him to guide her destinies. He, in his wisdom, seemed entirely ignorant of everything that had been said and done against him. He never uttered a reproach.

"There are circumstances so far above human foresight," he declared, "that it is impossible to lay down any hard and fast line of conduct. One of the most important qualities in a monarch should be his ability to be indulgent. I am prepared to forgive all those who only betrayed *me*."

Consequently he received all the women except those who had deserted the Empress and all the men except those who had been false to France. The only fault the liberals could find with him was that he banished the traitors and sequestered all their property. He also took too harsh steps [2] against members of the King's household, which, although they were not carried out, nevertheless sowed the seed for future hostility. It might have been more advisable for him to allow the former dukes and peers to remain members of the upper Chamber, for they would not have been unwilling to rally to his support. But he had become accustomed to think of them as his enemies and, convinced they would always remain so, he surrounded himself almost entirely with liberals and even sought to win over the republicans. These two classes formed the most numerous and the most energetic

political group and the one most capable of executing his plans since their interests coincided with his.

Already circumstances made my life again a troubled one. I did not have a moment to myself. Other people claimed every instant of my time. The Duchesse d'Orléans[3] and the Duchesse de Bourbon[3a] were the first to whose interests I had to attend. I also took pleasure in thus revenging myself by kindness for the way in which the royalists had behaved toward me. The Emperor allowed Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans an income of 400,000 francs besides the sum of 1,800,000 francs due her for the timber she had cut in the former state forests, which she had taken over again during the Restoration. The Duchesse de Bourbon received an income of 250,000 francs. The day after his arrival the Emperor dispatched one of his aides-de-camp to assure them they would be safe. I also sent Baron Devaux.

Madame de Vitrolles asked me for a private audience, which request I granted. She came with her daughter to implore me to ask the Emperor to release her husband. He had been arrested at Toulouse and brought to Paris. In 1814, before the Emperor's abdication he had gone over to the cause of the Comte d'Artois although still in the service of the Emperor. Madame de Vitrolles told me that she had just come from Ghent and felt justified in saying that the crown jewels would be sent back if her husband were released. I replied that out of gratitude to the King I should be pleased to do anything I could for those who had served him and needed assistance, and I promised to act as she wished. I did indeed speak of the matter to the Emperor that same evening. He answered me in an abrupt manner saying, "What does he dare to expect? Not to be taken and shot?" Instead of alarming Madame de Vitrolles by repeating this remark I merely told her that the Emperor was not yet favorably disposed toward her husband, that she must take no further action and I would let her know as soon as I believed

I could be more successful. She pointed out to me that her husband had been in charge of publishing the Moniteur [the official newspaper] and that not a derogatory word about me had ever been printed in it. I requested the chief of police to show special consideration toward her husband. Madame de Vitrolles came to see me several times. She overwhelmed me with compliments and exaggerated expressions of her gratitude. These later changed considerably. Two months afterwards in this same Moniteur I was mentioned along with Madame Hamelin, a very clever woman but not a person I received at my house, as having plotted the return of Emperor Napoleon, and when the writer went on to say I was the cause of all the misfortunes that had befallen France I knew exactly who was responsible for this attack.

Madame Du Cayla sometimes came to see me in the morning. She confided to me her regret that the Bourbons had been forced to leave and her hope that they would return. She did not conceal from me the fact that she was in touch with the court at Ghent. Far from taking advantage of her confidence I was flattered that she had a sufficiently good opinion of my character to believe I would not be indiscreet in spite of my situation at court. Moreover her hopes were not plots. I took advantage of the fact that she was writing to Ghent to offer my services to Monsieur Sosthènes de La Rochefoucauld, whose property had just been sequestered, although I was aware how indignant he was with me.

Monsieur de Lascours, to whom I had given my letter for the King, was not able to go as far as Ghent. He wished to entrust it to Monsieur de La Rochefoucauld, but the latter's remarks made him hesitate. Monsieur de La Rochefoucauld was sure, so he said, that my diamonds had been pawned to pay the troops to desert the King. My mild manner had deceived him, and he had never imagined I could be involved in such intrigues. Doubtless it was what I had said about public enthusiasm which

had convinced him I had been partly responsible for the Emperor's return. When I complained about his willingness to believe reports which were in contradiction with my character as he knew it, he replied to Madame Du Cayla justifying his attitude. The first part of his reply was in accordance with that belief in the royalist cause which he had always held. He dwelt on his joy in sharing the misfortunes of those illustrious victims of a cause to which he was so utterly devoted. In the second part he did not venture to try to explain my character or go into detail regarding my conduct, but he claimed not to be able to understand my fondness for my favorite flower, violets, which I always wore and which now served as an emblem for the supporters of the Empire. I did not at first see how an intelligent man could establish any connection between such an important event as the Emperor's return and a modest flower that I wore every spring; but on second thoughts I did understand it on the part of a royalist, since these men who had imagined they could make a revolution by adopting a white ribbon as an emblem could imagine others had done the same with a flower.

Meanwhile the enthusiasm of the public had gradually become less marked. Certain laws had been passed not in accordance with the ideas which were popular just then. People demanded unrestrained liberty, and it was necessary to take steps to defend the country against enemies both abroad and at home. Then too the refusal of the foreign governments to accept peace terms made people anticipate another war in the near future and this still further altered those favorable sentiments which the nation had at first entertained. It was necessary to take measures for defense, and on all sides everyone demanded liberty.

Doubtless the Emperor had realized that the first results of that liberty would be harmful to him and would interfere with his plans, but yielding to public opinion he drew up an additional clause in the statutes of the Empire.

This clause provided for certain rights for which people had been asking a long time, but the manner in which they were accorded displeased everyone. People considered that this combination of an old and a new régime was merely a concession that existing circumstances made necessary, and was a means by which Napoleon later would reestablish absolute power. At the same time the venomous and vehement criticism of certain men of letters provoked a movement of violent hostility toward the Emperor. The hopes of the royalists revived. Some of them relinquished the idea of obtaining the posts at court they had already asked for and withdrew to their country estates, there to await future events; others made up their minds to go to Ghent to explain to the King as best they might the reasons for their somewhat tardy devotion. Still others remained in Paris to try to influence public opinion and help the enemies of France and of the Emperor by all means in their power.

The return to Paris [4] of the two kings, Jerome and Joseph, aroused a certain amount of uneasiness. People feared that they might still claim their former dominions and that France would be obliged to undertake the reconquest of those territories. The whole tendency on the part of the public opinion was toward peace and constitutional freedom under a popular sovereign such as the Emperor. These sentiments were practically unanimous. Any plans for war or conquests would have deprived the Emperor of the affection of his subjects. The anxiety which the sight of his brothers had aroused promptly vanished when the Emperor, so as to dissipate the least doubt as to his intentions, commanded all his brothers to resume their titles of Prince and Imperial Highness. The Emperor, who had had so much difficulty in persuading his brothers to leave France in order to occupy foreign thrones, and had placed them there only that they might help maintain a vast system of international alliances, now realized that he would be obliged to keep his

enemies as neighbors. But he counted on the fact that their subjects, who for ten years had lived under a system of government similar to ours, would remain the friends of France. When nations have the same needs and aspirations the personality of the person who governs them becomes less important.

The first time I met Prince Joseph he was very distant toward me. He did not come to call until a long time after he had returned to Paris and he called then only because the Emperor had asked him several times if he had been to see me. Jerome came but once to my house. For a long while there had not been any intimacy whatsoever between us.

The arrival [5] of Prince Lucien produced an effect contrary to that of his brothers. The fact that he was constantly opposed to the Emperor's wishes and the manner in which he had always declined to accept any high rank had caused people to form a high opinion of his character. It was well known that he had always proclaimed his liberal tendencies, and this was looked upon as a favorable sign. He came to see me, was most polite, talked a great deal about my husband and urged a reconciliation between us. This I assured him was quite impossible.

One evening when we were all gathered about the Emperor the question of the allowance of the various members of his family came up. "France is not rich," he declared; "economy is necessary. A million a year is all that a French prince should have. As far as you are concerned," he went on looking at me, "you will be allowed only 500,000 francs if you insist on refusing to live with your husband. It is simply a foolish idea of yours. You must make up your differences. Louis is getting old; he has become more reasonable."

"Sire," I replied, "no reconciliation is possible any longer. Since I did not rejoin my husband when you had disgraced him I proved to the world that there was an insurmountable barrier between us."

"Nonsense, nonsense," replied the Emperor, "those were just silly fancies."

This conversation discouraged me profoundly. I recalled all that I had been through and foresaw that my misfortunes were about to begin again.

I decided to ask for a private interview with the Emperor. He granted me one; but hardly had I begun to explain the reasons which rendered it impossible for me to reconcile myself with my husband, when he dismissed me, saying he had work to do and that he would hear what I had to say that evening. I called several days in succession but with no success. Next I wrote him and his reply was that we should have to await my husband's arrival.

Several days later I heard through Queen Julie that the King in a letter addressed to the Emperor had declined to come to Paris unless his brother consented to our being divorced. The Emperor had referred to this suggestion as a mad idea and had not replied. Meanwhile my uncertainty was most painful. It was true that I still had my two sons with me, but I hardly dared console myself with their company. A divorce was contrary to my religious principles, and for any real peace of mind I should have had to have the assurance that I could secure a separation and continue to attend to my children's education. Finally, after many entreaties I obtained from the Emperor a letter authorizing me to live away from my husband.

The fine weather made the Emperor decide to live at the Elysée [6] in order to take the air without interrupting his work, which was proving too much for his health. One day he sent me an invitation by the Grand Marshal to lunch with him at Malmaison, and he named the persons he should like to have meet him there. I admit that I was reluctant to act as hostess at a house which I had left under such sad circumstances and to which I had never returned since. Fearing the surroundings would

provoke too violent emotions and wishing at least to experience them without being observed, I left Paris that same evening[7] and went to Malmaison. How deeply moved I was to behold once more that place which my mother had adorned and which had now, after having been neglected for so long, become more or less a wilderness! Everything recalled her presence and affected me deeply. I abandoned myself unrestrainedly to my grief. The night calmed me somewhat, and I was ready to receive the Emperor without appearing too much distressed. He arrived at nine o'clock. It was clear that he too was deeply moved. He walked all over the grounds with me and everywhere he would stop and say, "How all this reminds me of her! I cannot believe she is no longer here."

After lunch he stepped into his carriage with me, Monsieur Molé and Monsieur Denon. He wished to talk to the latter on matters connected with art collections. The other guests followed us in other carriages. Our drive was a long one, and the talk touched upon a thousand subjects. The Emperor praised the conduct of Monsieur de Sainte-Aulaire, ex-préfet of Toulouse, saying: "His proclamation was that of a good Frenchman who knows the dangers of a foreign invasion. All the Frenchmen should agree on that subject. I also approved of the way he spoke of the Bourbons." I was glad to hear this favorable comment and I mentioned that it applied to one of my close friends whose character and mind I admired.

I spoke to the Emperor about Madame de Staël's having said she intended to go and see him. He said: "I am sure she and I would become friends. At Elba I read her latest book[8] and I cannot see why in the world the French police forbade its being sold here. I found nothing in it that could give offense to the government." He spoke also of Monsieur Benjamin Constant.[9] "He has a great deal of talent. His book on the freedom of the press pleased me very much. He reasons well." He

mentioned Monsieur de Talleyrand. "I knew for a long time that he was deceiving me, but I never thought he would go as far as he did. I treated him as I should have treated a gossipy old woman and let him keep on talking without paying attention to what he said."

On our return to the château the newspapers were brought to him. He had me read aloud his letter to Marshal Grouchy, printed by the Moniteur, in which he instructed the Marshal to protect the departure of the Comte d'Artois, who had just been arrested in the south of France. He seemed satisfied by this act of magnanimity and our approval. Monsieur Molé said to me privately: "His letter is all very well, but I wish he had not insisted upon the return of the crown jewels. It would have been better not to ask for anything."

Before he left, the Emperor received the visits of the authorities of Rueil and the parish priest. On this occasion I again remarked something I had already noticed several times before. When receiving people the Emperor had no graciousness of manner nor did he make any pretense of affability toward them. He went straight to the point and spoke of the subject which they came to see him about as though he wished to secure information and take some favorable action in regard to the matter. This attitude on the part of a ruler appeared to me to be superior to that which consists in uttering banal phrases, which may flatter people's self-esteem but which do not hold out any hope for improving conditions. Just before he stepped into his carriage the Emperor wished to see the room in which my mother had died. "Don't come with me," he said; "it would prove too great a strain for you." When he left he seemed deeply stirred.

I returned to Paris in his carriage because mine was not ready, and the Grand Marshal [Bertrand] accompanied us. The Emperor read official documents all the way and did not say a word to us. When we arrived at the Tuileries we found Monsieur de Flahaut, who had just

come back from his mission of delivering messages to the Emperor of Austria and Empress Marie Louise. He had not been able to reach Vienna, but had been stopped at the frontier of the Kingdom of Würtemberg and obliged to return to France. This formal refusal on the part of the foreign powers to receive any communication from the Emperor proved that we could not hope to reach any understanding with them.

The Emperor wished the princes who belonged to his family to receive the formal visit of the various government officials. They were supposed to call first on Joseph, then on me, then on Lucien and finally on Jerome. This order of precedence provoked violent family dissensions. Prince Lucien being older than my husband considered he should come before me. Jerome insisted that having been made prince before his brother Lucien received this title he should follow him only if age alone was made the basis for this precedence. After a special family council to discuss the matter it was agreed that the senatorial decree (*sénatus-consulte*), which placed the Emperor's family on the throne and recognized only two of his brothers, Joseph and Louis, as members of his dynasty, having been approved by the popular vote in 1804, could not undergo any modification. To be sure, the Emperor had afterwards become reconciled with his other brothers, Jerome first and then Lucien. He had conferred on them the title of Prince of France, but this did not alter in any way the provisions of the original law regarding the prerogatives of the various members of his family or the order of succession to the throne. This was the decision that the cabinet council arrived at, and it was the Duc de Bassano who came to inform me of it. I confess it did not interest me particularly. Other far more important things were happening in France.

Madame Bertrand, the wife of the Grand Marshal, had just arrived in Paris from Elba. Following her husband's departure and that of the Emperor she felt she

could not be separated from the Grand Marshal and, without regard for any danger, obeying only her impulse, she and her children had sailed on board of a very small vessel. They had intended to land at Marseilles before even having had word how the Emperor's expedition had succeeded. When they landed, the city was still under the authority of the King's préfet, while the Duc d'Angoulême held a portion of southern France. Madame Bertrand received outrageous treatment. Without respect for her sex she was marched off to prison by guards carrying fixed bayonets. Several high officials dared declare in her presence and that of her children that her husband was a common highway robber who would shortly be executed. What seems still more incredible was that her brother-in-law Monsieur de La Tour du Pin, who was indebted to her for many favors, was at that time in Marseilles acting as special royal commissioner and did nothing to help her although possessing full authority to do so.

The Emperor's successes restored Madame Bertrand to liberty. When she arrived at Paris she insisted that those who had been responsible for her imprisonment should not be molested.

It was from Comtesse Bertrand and the Emperor himself that I heard a number of details about his life while on Elba. He had a little estate there in the country called Saint-Martin which he used to ride out to daily, but this was not enough to satisfy his taste for activity. His lodgings were most uncomfortable, but he did not complain. Frequently in the evening he would play *vingt et un* or dominoes. Some residents of the island were occasionally invited to see him, but the persons with whom he spent most of his time were Princess Pauline, Madame Mère and the members of their suite. No letters came from France, and this complete lack of news rendered their isolation still more painful. About New Year's Day a single letter from Monsieur le Comte Lavallette had been delivered but it contained only New Year's greetings and

expressions of his gratitude. Nor were the exiles able to obtain by any other means the least indication of what was happening in France. Many English people made the trip to Elba out of curiosity. They received a cordial reception, and the Emperor seemed to enjoy talking to them. Everyone questioned these visitors eagerly about France since they were the only ones from whom some true information could be secured.

Several weeks passed without any newspapers being delivered. Finally, all of those which had been delayed arrived at the same time. The Emperor read them eagerly and made up his mind to leave the island. The only person he informed of his intention was his mother, and he warned her to say nothing about it to anyone, least of all to Princess Pauline, whose lack of discretion alarmed him. My mother-in-law has since described their conversation to me. It occurred one evening when they were alone together walking about the garden.

The Emperor said: "France is miserable; she is losing every day some of those advantages I gained for her. What do you think of my project, mother? I wish to go and deliver her once more."

Madame Mère was overcome at this remark and replied, "Let me for a moment be only a mother, then I shall be able to answer you." Having regained her self-control she said firmly, "Yes, you must go; it is your destiny to do so. You were not made to die on this desert island."

Madame Bertrand also told me that Princess Pauline had done me a great deal of harm, as far as the Emperor and my mother-in-law were concerned, by repeating dozens of ridiculous stories that had sprung up because of my having remained in France. As soon as the situation had calmed down, Madame Mère landed at Marseilles. She came there from Naples, her daughter having sent a frigate to conduct her to that city as soon as the news of the Emperor's escape became known. Since the Emperor had said he would send for her as soon as he landed

in France, Madame thought that this was a vessel he had dispatched. Nevertheless, as she told me afterwards, fearing a surprise and thinking that the Queen of Naples might take advantage of the situation to seize Elba, she took all the necessary defensive measures and when she was leaving ordered the commanding officer not to surrender the island to anyone unless he came with orders from the Emperor. Once she had landed at Naples and found out her mistake and the Emperor's success, she at once set sail again in order to arrive promptly in France.

Marshal Bertrand came to tell me of Madame Mère's arrival, saying at the same time that probably she would decline to receive me, for he knew that while at Elba she had condemned my conduct severely. He admitted that he had thought it best to mention this fact to the Emperor and added that the Emperor had replied: "What fault can Madame find with Hortense? She did not mind going to see the Queen of Naples. Hortense never took sides against me." While thanking the Marshal for his advice I said that I knew what the Emperor's family thought about my stay in France, and, even though it had not helped them directly, at least it had frequently given me the opportunity to defend their cause. Moreover, since Madame was my mother-in-law I owed her respect and should therefore pay her a call. If she did not receive me I should not go back. I added somewhat maliciously: "A hostile attitude may do her more harm than it will me, for I know I am more popular than she is in France, and perhaps her conduct toward me will not be approved of."

Accordingly I called on Madame. The Emperor had already been there that morning, and perhaps it was to his visit that I owed my cordial reception. Madame made no criticism of any kind and treated me just as she always had.

Since his return the Emperor had been more inclined to see people. He liked to have them around him and

was ready to receive visitors. I secured an appointment one day for Tallien, who had come to ask me to do this as a favor. The republicans were well aware of the fact that the Emperor was their only hope of safety and that their cause and his were really the same. There was no chance of a reconciliation between them and the Bourbons. Consequently Tallien wished to attach himself openly to the Emperor, with whom he had been on bad terms since the expedition to Egypt. The Emperor had never been able to forgive certain men, one of whom was Tallien, because after having asked permission to accompany him to Egypt they had suddenly become discouraged and returned to France. He considered them deserters and felt that he was acting indulgently toward them by ignoring their existence.

Tallien, who had helped my mother in the days of the Reign of Terror, received an allowance from my brother. That was why he applied to me. The Emperor immediately granted his demand for an audience. Tallien came to see me as soon as he left the Emperor. He was deeply touched by the manner in which he had been received and told me that on arriving he had said to the Emperor, "Sire, I have given you cause to be dissatisfied with me." "Perhaps I have been unfair toward you also," replied the Emperor. "For a long time I have treated you severely. But we all make mistakes. Let us forget the past and may the present need of serving our country once more unite us."

When we were with him the Emperor enjoyed having us describe what had been done and said during his absence. One day the Duchesse de Rovigo informed him that violets had become one of the emblems of his adherents. "That explains," he said, "something I could not understand when I caught sight of all the bunches of violets which the women waved at me from a distance. What started the idea?"

I then told him that after he had gone the soldiers

always said he would come back when the violets bloomed again and that I had heard they always referred to him as *Père la Violette*. This amused him greatly.

One day he inquired why I did not bring my children oftener to see him. The next day[10] I brought them while he was having lunch. The architect Fontaine was present. The question of the debts left by the Bourbon princes was being discussed. Monsieur Fontaine said that their palace had been quickly and sumptuously fitted up, especially the Palais-Royal, but they had not paid for anything. The Emperor replied that he would settle all these debts himself, that none of the tradespeople would lose anything, and Fontaine was to tell them so. He also spoke of the temporary fortifications he was going to have built around Paris to defend the city against a surprise attack. "It will doubtless frighten the Parisians; they will think the enemy is at the gate; but the past has taught us it is best to take precautions."

After dinner he received an Englishwoman called Lady Hamilton, I believe, who presented him with a bust of Fox she had carved herself.[11] He examined it, thought it was a good likeness, and said: "This present pleases me very much. I admired Fox a great deal. If he had lived and if his advice had been followed, there would not have been so much bloodshed, and your finances would have been in a better condition."

The Emperor afterwards went into the garden (for he was still at the Elysée). I followed him and he informed me that my husband wished a divorce and that otherwise he would not return to France. He added laughingly that his brother doubtless had some love-affair on his mind, that the whole thing was perfectly ridiculous and he had thought it best not to reply to him. I then asked him to decide what was to be done with my children. He told me to select a good tutor for them, but said he could not prevent a father, no matter how silly he might be, from using his authority in regard to his

children. In reply to my fears that, owing to their extreme youth, they might not enjoy a proper education—which had always been the reason I had resisted my husband's demands—the Emperor replied: "What can you do about it? If your son had been born lame or with only one eye you would be helpless. These are things that cannot be helped, to which one must resign oneself."

Thereupon he changed the subject and asked me if it were true as people said that Marshal Ney had declared he would bring him back in an iron cage? I replied that the Marshal's wife, after the story had got about, had told me it was not true. The Emperor did not seem convinced and added: "Ney firmly intended to attack me, but when he saw that his troops were against this plan he found himself obliged to go with the current. Since then he has tried to make much out of what he was unable to prevent. You may be sure of this, but do not say so. My only supporters are the common people and all the army up to the rank of captain. The rest fear me, but I cannot count on them."

Finding him in a talkative mood I took advantage of the occasion to tell him that women generally were against him because he did not take the trouble to make himself agreeable to them, and that they exercised a greater influence on men's opinions than he was prepared to admit. He began to laugh and said: "Shall we have to have the Empire ruled by the distaff? After I have paid them the compliment of saying that they are well or badly dressed what else is there for me to talk to them about? I have other things on my mind. I don't know what's happened to the women since I left. Nowadays they all talk politics. In my day they were interested in chiffons. Do you know that you too have become an important personage, someone in whom the public is interested? People speak of you with much respect. In Paris they go so far as to say you are the head of a political party, a conspirator."

I replied that this public interest in me did not suit either my personal tastes or my attitude toward public affairs. "I am not astonished at the remarks made about me. Your enemies help spread them in order to lessen the impression your miraculous return created on public opinion. They pretend it was due to a conspiracy and since I was the only member of your family to have remained in France it is natural that I am assigned the leading rôle in the affair."

He then spoke of the Emperor of Russia. I was greatly pleased to tell the Emperor how admirably the Emperor of Russia had behaved toward my mother and me and how favorably he had spoken about him. In short, I expressed all those feelings which my gratitude and a genuine friendship prompted. I added that his keen desire for universal peace convinced me he would not seek to renew hostilities.

The Emperor listened to me without saying a word and when I repeated what the Emperor of Russia had said about his reluctance to place the Bourbons on the throne and how it was England and Austria who had had the most to do with this, he stopped, looked at me hard and said, "That was what the Emperor of Russia told you? Then he is indeed a deceitful man." Having said this, he went back to his study.

On my return home I found Madame Campan who had just left Marshal Ney. She repeated to me the conversation they had had about recent events. "The Queen was very rash in speaking as she did to my wife when I was leaving," the Marshal had said.

What I told Madame Campan was what I had told the Marshal's wife. I had felt that the Emperor's expedition would be successful, but if the Marshal thought I spoke as I did because I possessed some special information he was much mistaken. She assured me that Marshal Ney, the bravest of the brave, was so hasty in his decisions that he frequently needed the advice of someone

more familiar with political matters. The only excuse for his conduct in the present instance was that he had saved the country from civil war, for he had started with the firm determination to resist the Emperor but had not been able to. His proclamation of allegiance to the Emperor had greatly upset his family, she told me, and his wife had not been able to conceal how badly she felt about his conduct. Politics were causing trouble in many households. The Marshal himself, quite conscious that his conduct might be criticized, always replied, "The women know nothing about such things; it was all arranged beforehand," or gave some other equally futile explanation.

Meanwhile the preparations for a new campaign went forward rapidly. Every Sunday newly formed regiments of the Guard would parade through the streets. The Emperor and all the officers about him worked unceasingly to reorganize the army which had become disorganized during his absence. There was no longer hope of maintaining peace. Anxiety and sorrow once more filled Paris. The women who formed the backbone of the royalist party again became active and used every method to win over the officers from the cause they were about to defend. Several officers after having asked to be sent on active service went over to the enemy.

One day I said to the Emperor, "Sire, while you are with the troops we shall need someone energetic here in Paris. What will happen if the incidents of last year repeat themselves? You cannot be everywhere at once, and I feel alarmed when I see the same men as before in command."

"But, I am leaving you Marshal Davout," replied the Emperor. "He acted with sufficient energy at Hamburg, I should think, for you to feel reassured."

"Then everything will be all right," I answered. And said no more about it.

Two plans were discussed. Should the enemy be

attacked before they had collected all their forces or was it better to wait until they were on French soil? Some thought it better policy for the Emperor to place himself on the defensive, and until the attack was actually delivered to continue to make suggestions for peace, thus making it clear to all of Europe that he was sincerely opposed to renewed hostilities and proving he had done everything in his power to insure peace. Others, on the contrary, felt that since there could be no doubt as to the hostile plans of the foreign powers any delay might prove a handicap and it was best to attack the English and Belgian forces before they had been reenforced by any other armies. One day General de Lobau spoke of this to the Emperor in my presence. He declared he was in favor of attacking immediately. "Wait till we are entirely ready," answered the Emperor, hastily. "I need only a hundred thousand men and shall maneuver them so that they seem to be twice as many."

At this time Monsieur de Bourmont was in Paris without a post. The minister of war was suspicious of him and had rendered the Emperor equally suspicious. Monsieur de La Bédoyère, who had taken part in the Russian campaign with him, since he had also served under my brother's orders, admired him, assured the Emperor that he was trustworthy and secured an audience for him. Doubtless Monsieur de Bourmont managed to convince the Emperor of his devotion, for he was made a division commander and his children received scholarships. Shortly afterwards he went over to the enemy.

A new incident occurred which proved to me that the animosity of the European monarchs in regard to the Emperor had not diminished. One day a letter was delivered at my door unsigned, but whose writing I recognized as that of Monsieur Boutiaguine, the Russian *chargé d'affaires*. I learned afterwards that it had been dictated, word for word, by Emperor Alexander. This is what he said:

I have delivered to our angel (an epithet he frequently applied to the Emperor of Russia) all your messages. I find his ideas unalterable. He loves your country and its people, he is sorry for them and separates them from the man who again has become their ruler. No peace, no truce nor any possibility of reconciliation with this man. All of Europe feels the same. Without this man any conditions you please. No favoritism toward any party, and once he is eliminated no more war.

I beg to offer you the expression of my respectful devotion.

A note in exactly the same terms went to the Duc de Vicence. We considered it our duty to communicate these to the Emperor in order that he might make no mistake as to what Europe thought of him and of France. I was the more anxious to do this when I learned that my brother had just informed him of the immense preparations all the foreign powers were making to wage war against France and how impossible it would be to resist them. My brother added that he advised him to have himself reelected Emperor and then abdicate in favor of his son.

When I turned over Monsieur Boutiaguine's letter to him he read it without betraying the slightest emotion, and as he gave it back to me all he said was, "It is just the same as the one the Duc de Vicence received." What were his real impressions? Did he imagine that it was some trap the foreign powers had set for him in order to make him separate his personal cause from the national one and thus allow them to triumph more easily? Or did he, on account of the enthusiasm which had greeted his return, feel that his genius could conquer all obstacles, that it was his duty to obey the wishes of the public, and believe he must be victorious, especially when he realized what nation it was that so expressed its faith in his power? I leave it for others to judge.

An idea which particularly preoccupied the Emperor was the degree of affection which Empress Marie Louise still felt for him. Her majordomo had just arrived in Paris. He was an intimate friend of Monsieur Devaux, who was still in my employ. The Empress's steward told Monsieur Devaux that the Emperor had sent for him and asked many questions regarding the Empress. The servant was asked what letters he had brought with him to deliver. There was only one for the Duchesse de Montebello, and he had not dared hand this over to the Emperor because he knew it contained this sentence: "I am closely watched, but you who know my opinions know how unnecessary this is."

Since, on the other hand, the steward feared to get into trouble if he attempted to conceal the truth he came to ask Monsieur Devaux to advise him what course to pursue. Monsieur Devaux referred the matter to me. This is what I told him: "Who employs this majordomo? He should carry out his employer's orders. To do otherwise is to betray his mistress and fail in his duty." My advice was taken. The letter was delivered to the Duchesse de Montebello, and the Emperor knew nothing about it.

All the reports we received agreed that Empress Marie Louise had declined to return to France. The Emperor seemed hurt by this desertion. I noticed this one day when he was speaking sympathetically to me about my mother and said: "I have no portrait of Empress Josephine. I should be pleased if you gave me one." I sent him one which Quaglia had painted on a porcelain cup.

The preparations for the ceremonies of the Champ de Mai were now completed. The delegations of electors (*collèges électoraux*) were arriving from every part of France as well as delegates from all the regiments in the army. The cabinet ministers were supposed to receive them. The Emperor wished me to attend an evening reception given by Carnot, minister of the interior. I did so. The gathering was a large one and the musical

part of the program was executed by the students of the Conservatory. The concert ended with a song of mine, of which the refrain was, "We must defend our country." It was very appropriate, but I was almost embarrassed by the effect it produced. Before leaving I spoke to everyone, and received from the heads of the delegations and the deputies the most solemn assurances of their devotion and affection for the Emperor's dynasty. Yet so many professions of loyalty, although too spontaneous not to be sincere, did not make much of an impression upon me when I stopped to think that a momentary setback would destroy their effect.

The day [12] on which the ceremony of the Champ de Mai was to take place arrived at last. The Emperor was again to be proclaimed head of the French nation by a gathering of its representatives. The scene on the Champ de Mars was a most magnificent and impressive one. The center of the great field was filled with troops and the National Guard. A special enclosure was reserved near the École Militaire for the legislative bodies and the delegations from the army. The latter bore the former flags, the tricolors which they had been so reluctant to surrender and which were about to be blessed and returned to them. Opposite the throne was an altar surrounded by the clergy, and behind the throne a gallery for the princesses and the members of the court. When the Emperor appeared tumultuous cheers broke out. The Te Deum was sung but its solemn strains were interrupted by sounds of military music. The soldiers, whose martial aspect made them seem capable of defying the entire universe, assumed an attitude of devotion as they solicited divine protection on the cause they were about to defend. The masses of spectators by their silence, following their frantic outburst of joy, seemed to share the solemnity of the moment. The entire character of the ceremony was most awe-inspiring. In the speeches made to the Emperor the following phrases

were particularly noticed and attracted the most attention: "We will no longer accept those rulers whom foreign powers have imposed on us. We cannot trust their promise; they cannot trust our oaths of allegiance. We wish rulers whom France shall herself have chosen." At this moment a vast cry went up, "Long live the Emperor!" A few scattered shouts were heard of "Long live the Empress!" Suddenly the officers rose and exclaimed, "We shall go and bring her back." The moment was a dramatic one on account of the emotion that prevailed and the unanimity of sentiment which made failure seem impossible. Yet when I momentarily turned my eyes from the martial display before me I conjured up a vision of those other armies, the leagued forces of all Europe bearing down upon us, and our defenders this little group of heroes, who alone would resist them and who might be annihilated in a few days' time.

I cannot describe what gloomy forebodings filled my heart. Several persons noticed my emotion, and when the Emperor had proceeded to the middle of the Champ de Mars where he was to distribute the eagles and review the troops the Duc d'Otrante stepped up to me and inquired the reasons for my mournful air.

"Ah," I replied, "beyond all this ceremony lies the menace of war and that idea is a dreadful one."

"What else can you expect?" he said. "The Emperor has just missed a great opportunity. I advised him to abdicate today. Had he done so, his son would have succeeded to the throne and war would have been avoided."

"Alas!" I answered, "the thought of that conflict is a torture to me."

But it would have needed more than human qualities not to have been affected by all this enthusiasm. Perhaps too the Emperor thought that instead of placing his son on the throne his retirement would merely have hastened France's downfall.

It was natural when I saw so many of my country's

brave defenders gathered together in one mass that I should think of my brother, who was absent. He still formed a target for jealous hatred, doubts were expressed regarding his fidelity to the imperial cause, and the Emperor himself said to me one day, "Why does not your brother come back? One can always escape in disguise. A man can always go anywhere if he really wants to."

"Sire," I replied, "you know he is in danger of being imprisoned if he does not remain neutral, and he is not a man to break his parole."

After the ceremony of the Champ de Mai we also attended the opening of parliamentary session.[13] The days that followed were taken up by farewells which had never been more painful, for although we never had a more just cause to defend, we had never been faced with more obstacles.

CHAPTER XVI

FROM WATERLOO TO MALMAISON (JUNE 11–JUNE 29, 1815)

Napoleon Leaves for the Front—Visit to Bercy—Benjamin Constant Reads Aloud—First News of the Disaster—The Return of the Emperor —At the Elysée—The Abdication—Plans for Flight—Napoleon Visits Malmaison—June 25—June 26—Memories of Josephine—Flahaut and Davout—June 27—Madame Bertrand—The Day of Departure—Flahaut and Lavallette in Paris—The Departure of the Emperor—Hortense Returns to Paris—What France Owes Napoleon.

THE day set for the Emperor's departure for the front was a Sunday. During the family dinner, which always took place on that day of the week, he seemed in high spirits. I may be wrong, but this gaiety appeared to me to be assumed. He spoke about literature and was more talkative than usual. Madame Bertrand, whom I saw afterwards, was worried and told me that before entering the drawing-room he had sent for her to come into his private reception room to say good-by and had made the following remark, "Well, well, Madame Bertrand, may we not have cause to regret the island of Elba!" This doubt as to his success had alarmed her, for it was unusual, and I too was frightened to hear of it. That evening he received all his cabinet ministers. I brought him my children to say good-by. He did not dismiss us till quite late, and he left Paris before daybreak.[1]

The Prince d'Eckmühl had remained in command of the garrison of Paris. This was somewhat reassuring, as our position resembled so much that of the year before that we feared a similar outcome. I remained at home, seeing little of the Emperor's brothers, who treated me as a complete outsider. I heard only the most important items of news through the newspapers.

Private letters informed us that the welcome the Emperor received in the provinces and from the troops fully equaled that which we had witnessed in Paris. Soon afterwards the sound of cannon told us of a first victory. But how many more victims would still be required! The news of another military success, the more melancholy since it was gained against our countrymen, reached us from Vendée. Monsieur de la Rochejacquelein had been killed while fighting bravely for his cause. People rejoiced at the news in my presence. I replied, "We should feel sad at being in a position that causes us not to regret the death of a Frenchman."

A feeling which I could not explain made me want to go and see some corners of Paris I did not know, and which I imagined I might be seeing for the first and last time. I visited Bercy, stopping at the house of Madame de Nicolay. There I met General de la Roche-Aymon, who had always been an ardent supporter of the Bourbons. He related what the Faubourg Saint-Germain was saying about me. Their dislike was so violent and the stories they told so grotesquely exaggerated that we could not help laughing about it. Not only was I supposed to have taken an active part in bringing back the Emperor, but I was also accused of having ordered General Quesnel to be thrown into a river, although I had never even heard of a general by that name. Nevertheless I was surprised to hear Monsieur de la Roche-Aymon make fun of the seriousness with which the Duc de Berry had planned his campaign until March 20. I should have thought the only feeling that the fate of a family in distress and exile could arouse would be one of sympathy. On the contrary, I frequently heard jests made at their expense. Marshal M——,[2] for instance, who believed he was doing his duty when he conducted the King to the French frontier and refused any other post afterwards, allowed himself to ridicule the hasty flight and embarrassed attitude of the King, a man no longer young. One must always be fortunate in order to escape criticism.

I had given Monsieur Benjamin Constant an appointment to read me a short novel he had just written.[3] We had reached the climax of the narrative and were all in tears, including the author, when word came that the Duc de Rovigo wished to speak to me.

He informed me that ugly rumors were circulating, and that it was said we had been defeated.[4] That evening his wife and General Sébastiani called. They asked to speak to me privately. Their first words were: "All is lost. Our army has been wiped out. The Emperor will be here tonight, although he did everything he could to be killed."

"Alas," I queried hurriedly, "have many Frenchmen fallen?"

"None of our friends," replied the General. "I have just left King Joseph and I read all the dispatches he has received. The disaster is complete. More than thirty thousand men lie on the battle-field."

"Ah, our poor Frenchmen!" I exclaimed, and I felt all my courage leave me.

But I quickly regained control of myself as the full extent of this new blow dawned on me. Good fortune had definitely abandoned us, but the more cruel the wound the greater need for energy to resist its effects. I said to the General: "Our cause is hopeless, but I trust all is not lost for France. We must keep cool. Should not word be dispatched to General Rapp, who is in command at Strasbourg, telling him at all costs not to surrender the city to the enemy, but to prepare to resist? All our efforts must be bent to the task of escaping the foreign invasion."

The General replied, "The Emperor will be here tonight. He has doubtless already thought of that."

I returned to my drawing-room, and no one guessed by my attitude that anything special had taken place.

The next morning I heard the Emperor was back.[5] I at once hastened to the Elysée filled with emotions I cannot put into words. He was in conference with his

brothers.[6] I did not see him. I went to see Madame Bertrand. She was with her husband and gave me details of what had taken place. The Emperor had only returned in order to ask the Senate and Chamber of Deputies for more support. He still hoped all was not over and had dispatched his aides-de-camp to rally the scattered troops.

"Ah," I said to General Bertrand, "the Emperor's cause is really lost this time. It was a question of winning a single battle. He is mistaken if he thinks he will meet with a reception similar to that which brought him back to Paris. The French are so changeable. Had he won, everybody would have been on his side. He has been defeated; no one will support him."

"Why did we ever leave Elba?" suddenly asked Madame Bertrand. "What will become of the Emperor now?"

This idea oppressed all of us. I should have wished him to leave immediately for America. Madame Bertrand, on the other hand, insisted the English, so liberal and enlightened in their ideas, were the only nation worthy of receiving him and capable of understanding him.

I went out on foot along the Champs Elysées and I sent my carriage to wait for me on the Place de la Concorde. I had Madame Dillon with me. As we passed the gardens of the Elysée I saw a well-dressed woman talking to the sentry on duty. This seemed to me unusual. I approached quietly, accompanied by Madame Dillon and another lady who was in attendance. I heard the woman say, "You are being deceived. He is lost beyond hope of recovery. He has abandoned his army."

To this the sentinel replied, "Go away. I will never desert him."

Not being able to see the Emperor just then I returned at six o'clock to the Elysée. He was alone in the garden. Deeply moved, I advanced to greet him. I cannot tell whether he wished to conceal his own emotion, but he

assumed an air of surprise as he inquired, "What is the matter? What have people been telling you?"

"That you have met with misfortune, Sire," I replied.

He was silent for several moments, then turned and entered his study, motioning me to follow him. He appeared exhausted from moral and physical fatigue. Sitting at his desk he unsealed a package of letters, but did not read them, and it was not till dinner was announced that he seemed aware of my presence.

"You have doubtless already dined," he said. "Will you come and keep me company?"

I followed him. During dinner he made only some insignificant remarks. He seemed sunk in a profound reverie. He returned to the drawing-room, where his brothers and mother joined him, went with them into the garden, and I left the palace.

The Senate and Chamber, so I was told, were determined to depose the Emperor unless he abdicated immediately, and he was informed that this was the only means by which he could save France from a foreign invasion. The Powers had said so. Monsieur de Metternich also wrote this to the Duc d'Otrante who, secretly, showed the letter to all the members of the Senate and Chamber. Thus the man who turned to the spot where all the national forces centered in the hope of arousing the energy of the nation found everyone against him.

Those officers who had escaped after the defeat envied the fate of their brothers-in-arms lying dead on the field of battle. Not believing it possible to sustain such an unequal struggle, some despaired completely of their country's cause; others, placing their trust in the promises of the foreign powers, thought that, once the Emperor was sent away, the nation would be allowed to choose its ruler and not have one imposed by force. Still others were of the opinion that anything was better than to place themselves and their country at the mercy of the foe.

Monsieur de La Bédoyère was one of those who held absolutely to the last point of view. He regretted that the Emperor had not presented himself before the legislative bodies covered with the dust of conflict, as had been agreed when he left the army. To separate the Emperor's fate from that of the country was to sacrifice the former without saving the latter. Monsieur de La Bédoyère declared that every Frenchman should rally to the defense of the imperial eagles, should enlist at once and, inspired by the Emperor's military genius, rise to those heights of heroism which had assured the triumph of our Revolution. He predicted that if any other course were pursued the result of our blind confidence would be a series of calamities: the Bourbons first, and in their train, tribute money, personal revenge and national humiliation.

Meanwhile the Chamber of Representatives in a hurry to discard the man who in its opinion had become the sole obstacle that stood between the French people and peace clamored for an abdication. At the same time it discussed the principles of political freedom as though armed Europe were advancing to enforce this ideal. As for the Emperor, what could he, alone as he was, hope to accomplish? Once more the genius was obliged to bow before the mistaken judgment of the mob. He abdicated in favor of his son.

King Jerome had shown his courage at Waterloo and been wounded there.[7] He returned to Paris. Monsieur de Flahaut and all the other aides-de-camp whom the Emperor had dispatched to rally the scattered troops and mobilize the National Guard came to report the result of their mission. They announced that there were many more troops available than we believed, but that the news of the Emperor's abdication had spread discouragement everywhere and many of the soldiers had thrown away their weapons and returned to their homes.

While the news of the death of so many heroes had

plunged us into profound mourning, the ladies who supported the royalist cause displayed an absolutely indecent rejoicing. I can understand hatred for a certain dynasty, an ardent desire to see it overthrown, but that people should celebrate a victory won by foreign troops over our national forces, the defeat of our country and the sacrifice of the lives of thirty thousand Frenchmen, that is something I cannot understand.

I spent all my time at the Elysée. A crowd constantly stood outside the garden. The common people were as eager to catch a glimpse of their sovereign in the hour of his distress as the upper classes were to avoid him. The constant cheering of this crowd had something poignant about it, since in this hour of distress it recalled the memories of the past. Some officers, catching sight of the Emperor walking about the garden, even scaled the wall, and throwing themselves at his feet exclaimed, "Do not abandon us." The Emperor himself appeared touched by this devotion. Prefect of Police Réal, who witnessed this scene, told me privately: "And to think, madame, that, acting on orders received from the Provisional Government, I had money distributed to quiet this patriotic ardor."

As for me my one thought was: How can the Emperor be saved? I watched him talking on and on with his brothers without ever reaching a decision. The longer he waited, the more he ceased to be master of his fate, but it seemed that no one, not even he, cared about what happened to him. I was annoyed by this state of indecision. This apparent immobility roused in me a desire to take active steps. First of all, I told Madame Mère my ideas. She approved of them, and I decided to enter the Emperor's study. He was sitting facing the fireplace. Méneval, his former secretary, stood beside him. My heart beat violently. The thought that I was about to offer advice to the man who had never accepted it from anyone intimidated me. But the idea of the danger he

was in conquered my shyness and I said to him quickly: "Sire, since the French nation thus abandons you, it does not deserve your consideration. Only think of what is best for you personally. Do not lose an instant in insuring your own safety. If it is America you choose as a refuge, hurry off to a port before England will have learned of your decision. If you prefer Austria, fix your terms without delay. Perhaps its ruler may remember you are his son-in-law. As for the English they would consider it too great an honor if you appealed to them. They would imprison you in the Tower of London. The Emperor of Russia is the one man you can trust. He was once your friend. He is loyal and generous. Write to him. He will appreciate it."

The Emperor did not answer a word. He listened with a calmness that contrasted with my nervousness and then said: "And you? What are you planning to do? Will you go to your country-place near Geneva?"

I admit I could not resist feeling a momentary irritation to be still treated as though I were a child. "Ah, Sire, I do not care what becomes of me: I care only about your fate. Even the least favorable of the courses I suggest is better than the apathy which has come over you."

At this moment one of his chamberlains, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, came in through the private apartments.

"Well," said the Emperor, "you have just left the Chamber of Deputies? What is happening there?"

"The attitude of the members is a thoroughly satisfactory one," replied the chamberlain with a satisfied air. "Napoleon II has been proclaimed amid much enthusiasm."

"But," interrupted the Emperor, "what is being done?"

"The articles of the constitution are being discussed."

"Ah," exclaimed the Emperor, rising abruptly, "we have gone back to the days of Byzantium. People stop to discuss when the enemy is at the gates."

A few minutes later I saw the Duc de Vicence, to whom I related my conversation. He shared my preference for Russia, and the next day when speaking to the Emperor about the same subject, he received the following answer:

"Austria, never. They wounded me too deeply by keeping my wife and my son. To surrender to Russia is to make myself the prisoner of a man; to surrender to England is to surrender to a nation."

One evening I was at the Elysée when the Emperor came up to me and said: "Malmaison belongs to you. I should enjoy going there and I should be pleased if you would stay there with me. I shall leave tomorrow to go there, but I do not wish to occupy the Empress's suite."

I expressed my pleasure at being able to be useful to him and I made all arrangements for my departure. When several of my friends heard the news they came and begged me not to go and settle at Malmaison. They declared that, with the violent animosity certain people felt toward me in Paris, there would be all sorts of rumors spread to influence public opinion against me. Nor must I forget the malicious gossip of which I had previously been made the object. To remain with the Emperor up to the last moment was to prevent even the allied monarchs from being able to continue their protection of me. All these arguments might have influenced me if I had been sufficiently petty to stop and consider my private interests. I replied that I would never abandon the man whom I had considered as my father, that now in his hour of misfortune I could best prove my gratitude, that since my conscience was clear I should feel myself above the criticism of society. It did not matter if others were dissatisfied with my conduct so long as I personally was pleased with it. As for the foreign kings, the only things I hoped from them were passports which would allow me to retire to some far-away, secluded spot.

The next morning[8] I left accompanied by Madame

d'Arjuzon, having concealed my children in the house of a person [9] whom I could trust in order to be able to devote all my attention to the Emperor. I reserved one wing of the château for him and I kept the other containing the Empress's apartment for me and my attendants. I made the small gallery into a dining-room where we and our suite were to have dinner. The Emperor arrived in the morning. I felt sad when I went to receive him to think how this place which he had visited when at the height of his success and fame now again received him reduced to the last stage of wretchedness, since he was deprived even of the presence of his former devoted and affectionate companion. I, the daughter of that companion, was able to offer him only a slight comfort in his sorrow, and I was conscious of all I lacked. I informed him of all the measures I had taken to insure his comfort. He approved of them. Then I left him by himself, asking him to summon me when he might happen to desire my company.

That evening the Emperor's brothers and the Duc de Bassano and Monsieur Lavallette came out to see us. I remained in the drawing-room with all the officers belonging to my household and that of the Emperor. Our only topic of conversation, the only thing we thought about, was how to save him. The young officers who had accompanied him assured us that the royalists were going to try to kidnap him. They prepared to defend him as best they might. Nobody went to bed. Thirty men from the dragoon regiments who had remained at the near-by replacement camp on account of their wounds and were not properly armed, Monsieur Gourgaud, Monsieur de Montholon, Monsieur de Montaran, four orderlies, the aide-de-camp who was on duty, Monsieur de Las Cases the chamberlain, a young page Sainte-Catherine d'Audiffredi, a young American who was a relative of my mother, and my equerry Monsieur de Marmol, were all the force we could muster in the way of a defense. These gentlemen, however, managed to reassure me by

the opinion they had of the royalists' courage, which they were continually making fun of. I retired late accompanied by Madame d'Arjuzon. All the men stayed awake.

The morning following his arrival at Malmaison the Emperor sent for me about eleven o'clock. He was walking alone in the gardens. The weather was magnificent. He inquired about my health and asked what I had done the night before, but did not wait for a reply and continued: "Poor Josephine! I cannot become accustomed to this place without her. It always seems as though I were going to catch sight of her behind the next hedge, picking the flowers she loved so dearly. Poor Josephine!" Noting how this topic depressed me he added: "It is true she would be very sad if she could see the way things are going at present. There was only one subject we ever disagreed about, her debts. How I used to scold her about them! She was certainly the most charming person I have ever known. She was a true woman with all the qualities that word conveys, quick, lively and so good-hearted. Have another portrait made of her for me. I want it as a medallion." I promised to have this done.

The Emperor's brothers and his mother arrived together. The latter seemed greatly downcast. I called King Joseph aside and again began to plead with him for the Emperor to decide on some line of action. All he was willing to say was, "You are right." I finally withdrew. Our attitude was natural enough, all things considered, the Emperor's one thought being to save France and mine to save him.

In the drawing-room I found Monsieur de Flahaut, Monsieur de La Bédoyère and the Duc de Rovigo, who informed me that in Paris only a few royalists had dared show themselves. A moment later a man arrived to inform the Duc de Rovigo of the plot formed by five hundred royalists to murder the Emperor that night. The Duchesse de Rovigo also appeared. On the way to Mal-

maison she had met several men on horseback, among them one of her cousins who was a notorious royalist. This news was passed on to the Emperor. He paid no attention to it. Toward nightfall our young men, who during the day had gone to Paris, began again to prepare to take precautionary measures against a sudden attack. The idea of seeing fighting and people killing one another under my very eyes made me tremble, and when I heard the remark, "We shall defend ourselves as they did at Bender," I did not know whether, if such a thing happened, I should not prove a coward. During one of these conversations, which occurred frequently, we heard the report of a pistol. Everyone sprang to arms except the Emperor, who did not seem to have noticed it. Our guard dashed into the park. Nothing was found there, and everything calmed down once more. Had the Provisional Government, which was in a hurry for the Emperor to leave, hired someone to make a demonstration in order to frighten him? No one ever knew just what had taken place.

No emotion was spared me. I was forced to assist at another painful scene. Two generals who had gravely compromised themselves on behalf of the Emperor hurried to Malmaison with the news that the Provisional Government was selling France to the Bourbons, that the scaffold awaited those who had taken sides with the Emperor, that flight was absolutely urgent but that they lacked the means to escape. Unless the Emperor provided the necessary funds they would blow their brains out in his presence. I should have so willingly taken all these burdens upon myself in order to spare the man who so urgently needed leisure to decide on his personal fate. But the generals insisted on seeing him, and they obtained what they seemed to require so urgently.

I also received the visit of the wife of General Girard, who had been mortally wounded at Waterloo. He had been left alone and dying at an inn fifty miles from Paris.

His wife was penniless and in great distress. She was anxious to reach and succor her husband and had come to demand the Emperor's assistance. Scarcely had I mentioned the matter to the Emperor when word arrived that the General had breathed his last. Thus all those forms of anguish which accompany misfortune were forced upon me.

General Drouot, who felt that the army was in desperate need of its leaders and that at such times his duty to his country took precedence over his duty to his sovereign, decided to act on the Emperor's suggestion and assume command of the Guard. He left for the front after bidding us farewell.

We were constantly on the alert, but as our army drew nearer Paris the royalists again became alarmed and a surprise attack on Malmaison grew more unlikely. In the evening [10] the Emperor received the visit of an officer who on behalf of the army urged him to place himself once more at the head of his troops. I do not know whether the Provisional Government was informed of this, but the next day it sent General Beker to take over the command of our personal body-guard. When Madame d'Arjuzon repeated to me a remark the General had whispered to her, "They fear he may attempt some rash enterprise," I felt we were really prisoners, and exclaimed sadly: "Whoever could have imagined that some day the Emperor would be the prisoner of Frenchmen at Malmaison!" Yet as he was surrounded by a group of young men devoted to the imperial cause General Beker's mission could not have had any practical effect.

All the young officers were eager to see the Emperor leave at once, place himself at the head of the army, once more risk his luck, and try to save France. I, and I alone, being calmer than they were, thought the time for such an attempt had passed. Too many political parties had now openly declared against him. Deserted by those who represented the nation, the only ones who could

have conferred the proper authority on him, his only thought now should be how to insure his personal safety and to escape swiftly from France. Nevertheless, in Paris people still talked about the wild plans that were being made at Malmaison, and held me responsible.

My fears for the Emperor's future diminished somewhat when I heard that two frigates were waiting for him in the harbor of La Rochelle. In connection with this, however, a difficulty arose. The Provisional Government wished the Emperor to proceed aboard immediately, but he, on the other hand, wished first to have the assurance that it was he who should decide whither the vessels were to proceed. Monsieur de Flahaut was sent to Paris to arrange matters. A violent scene took place between him and the minister of war, the Prince of Eckmühl, in which the Prince went so far as to declare that he was prepared himself to arrest the Emperor if he did not leave the country. Monsieur de Flahaut, indignant at this attitude, replied, scornfully: "Such remarks do not surprise me coming from a man whom I have always seen groveling at the Emperor's feet." The question of the two frigates still further delayed the Emperor's departure.

Every day seemed to me to add to the Emperor's danger and lessen his chances of escaping from the English. I again took the matter up with King Joseph, the person who was the most frequently with the Emperor. I pointed out how urgent it was that the Emperor should leave France, for to stay where he was even a few hours longer would perhaps mean that he could not slip away. I said that what he should do was to secure a passport under another name, but with a description that fitted him, and hasten to Le Havre, while I undertook to guard Malmaison. I was sure I could manage to arrange things so that people would think he was still there. Nothing was done, however, and the days passed without altering the situation in any way.

At noon one day [11] the Emperor sent for me. He was in his private garden with a man I did not know and a young boy who seemed to be about nine or ten years old. Taking me aside the Emperor said, "Hortense, look at that child. Whom does he resemble?"

"Your son, Sire. He is the very image of the King of Rome."

"You think so, do you? Then it must be true. I did not believe that I had a sensitive nature, but the sight of him has made a deep impression on me. You seem to know who he is. How did you find out about it?"

"Sire, the public has spoken a good deal about the matter, and this close resemblance proves that people were not mistaken."

"I admit that for a long time I doubted he was really my son. Nevertheless, I had him educated in a boarding-school in Paris. The man in whose charge I had placed him wrote me asking what my intentions were in regard to his future. I wished to see him, and like you I was struck by his resemblance to my son."

"What are you going to do with him, Sire? I should have been glad to look after him; but do you not believe that to do so would give people a chance to say more malicious things about me?"

"Yes, you are right. I should have been glad to know that he was under your care, but people would certainly say he was your son. When I have settled down in America I shall have him join me there."

He then went over to the gentleman, who was waiting a little distance off. I approached the boy, who was as lovely as a picture. I asked him if he liked the school he was in, and what games he played. He answered that lately he and his companions had pretended to make war on each other. There were two sides, one called the Bonapartists, the other the supporters of the Bourbons. I asked him to say which side he belonged to.

"I am one of the King's men," he replied. When I

inquired the reason he answered, "Because I like the King and do not like the Emperor." This made me think that he had not the slightest suspicion of his birth or whom he had come to see. I found his position so strange that I asked him why it was he did not like the Emperor.

"I have no particular reason except that I belong to the side of the King." The Emperor joined us, dismissed the man who was in charge of the boy, and went in to lunch. I followed him, and he kept repeating: "The sight of the child affected me. He looks like my son. I did not think I could experience the emotions he aroused. And so you were really struck by his resemblance to me and my son?" All during his lunch he kept referring to the subject.

Monsieur Gabriel Delessert arrived from Paris to inform me that one of General Exelmans' aides-de-camp, who had just left the advanced posts, thought that the enemy's troops were taking a move in the direction of Saint-Germain, and that doubtless their intention was to cut off the Emperor's retreat. The Emperor was in his study. I went in to give him the news Monsieur Delessert had brought. He sent for him and in my presence asked him some explanations of what he had just said. On the table was a large map, on which pins indicated the position of the various army corps. The Emperor changed several of them in accordance with what Monsieur Delessert told him. He inquired the estimated force of the hostile troops that were surrounding Paris, and on receiving the answer exclaimed, "Poor France! To think she must submit to a handful of Prussians!"

When I was again alone with the Emperor I ventured to ask him some questions about our position. I inquired if our forces were larger than those of the enemy.

"Certainly not," he replied. "But what cannot one do with Frenchmen?" The Duc de Bassano and Monsieur Lavallette were announced, and I withdrew.

Several ladies from Paris came out in the evening to say good-by to him. Madame Duchatel was among them. He received them all in his study, and I did not see him again till the next day.

When I awoke I was told that the young Polish woman, Madame W——,[12] had already arrived accompanied by her children, that she had made her farewells to the Emperor and had asked to see me. She was all in tears. I shared her grief and invited her to stay and lunch alone with me so that people might not see her in such a state.

I learned on coming down to the drawing-room that the minister of the navy had come during the night, and the Emperor at last had been granted the right to do what he pleased with the frigates, and consequently nothing further prevented his departure. At that moment he was engaged in examining the carriages chosen for his trip. The persons who were with him came back indignant at the shocking state these vehicles were in. Doubtless the equerry in charge, who had retained his post in spite of the various political upheavals, hoped to make his future equally safe and was already showing his devotion to the next ruler by providing the Emperor with the carriages that were the least solid. I suggested he take my traveling carriage, but he declined, wishing to leave in an open calash. He asked me what my plans were and what means I possessed. I told him that all I had were my diamonds and those of my mother, as the old debts had absorbed her estate. I was planning to retire to Switzerland, where I wished to lead a simple life, and had enough money to do this. I added that he had better take a few diamonds with him and that mine were at his service. It was he who had given them to me, and they belonged to him. He consented to take one string worth about two hundred thousand francs. He insisted on giving me a note for this amount although I obstinately resisted his doing so, regretting bitterly to be able to do so little for the man to whom I owed everything.[13] Then,

for the first time, he talked to me about his plans, told me he was going to the United States, and that the only thing those who bore his name had to do was to join him there.

"That is the only way your children can succeed," he said, "for if the Bourbons come back on the throne they will stay there longer than people think."

Just then we heard shouts from the highway. We went to see what was happening. All the people in the château joined us. We saw several hundred soldiers, facing toward Malmaison, throwing their hats in the air and crying, "Long live the Emperor." They were being sent to Saint-Germain. The enthusiasm they displayed for the man who was obliged to leave them made a deep impression on all those present. The Emperor seemed touched by it. "It is not cheers but acts which I need," he said, and at once withdrew to his study. His mother and his family came to receive his farewells. Madame Mère asked me what she could do until the time came when she could go to join her son in America. I suggested that she might return to Paris, believing that she could expect only good treatment from everyone, including even her son's enemies. We could not remain isolated at Malmaison after the Emperor's departure, nor could we, without passports bearing the signature of the allied sovereigns, risk attempting to make our way through the hostile armies. Proper passports were the only favor we asked. The Emperor of Russia would certainly not refuse such a simple request for something we were entitled to.

Madame Bertrand, having made all her preparations for accompanying the Emperor with her husband, arrived from Paris. She insisted with her customary vivacity that he should seek refuge in England, where he would be marvelously well received. She went to see him in his study, and told me afterwards that when she expressed her fear of witnessing a naval battle he had promised not to resist if he encountered English vessels while on the

high seas. She gave me further details as to his future plans. He intended to settle in America and to live the life of a private citizen.

"Queen Hortense is to come there later with her children," he had added. "She will make our stay still more agreeable." We urged Madame Bertrand not to attempt to follow her husband immediately, but to wait till he had reached his destination; her attachment to him, however, caused her to refuse the idea of being separated from him. Her willingness to share the perils of such an expedition could not fail to win our sympathy. Perhaps too we felt a little envious of a domestic happiness that made such courage seem quite a matter of course. She and I spent the evening walking about together. The weather was superb, and the stillness of the night was a striking contrast to the inner turmoil we were experiencing. Yet it was difficult, even while we breathed such pure air and let our eyes wander over such enchanting landscapes, to forget that unhappiness and misfortune were so close at hand. We had been sitting side by side for some time on a rustic bench when we caught sight of the Emperor himself, who had come to join us. He seemed to share the peaceful tranquillity that this restful scene inspired, but as he seated himself beside us on the bench he exclaimed: "Ah, how beautiful Malmaison is! Surely, Hortense, we should be happy if we might only remain here."

I could not reply. My voice would have betrayed my emotion. It was the first time I had ever known him to care for any particular place. I was the more surprised because I had never imagined such things would affect him. When men desert us we turn instinctively to Nature, who does not deceive. For who is there who can without emotion leave a spot where he has been happy and which he will never see again, a spot associated in his mind with so many visions of success, fame, fortune and happiness, a spot where so many hearts have submitted to his spell, whence he has set forth to conquer the world,

and where now he is spending the last few days that he is allowed to live in his own country, before setting out alone, banished from his native soil, to face whatever uncertain fate awaits him overseas?

The evening passed as the others had done. We remained in the drawing-room talking about the Emperor's trip with the persons who were to accompany him, and he stayed in his study with the Duc de Bassano.

The next morning [June 29, 1815] all preparations were made for the departure. King Joseph arrived early. He was having a private talk with the Emperor, when Rousseau, my *valet de chambre,* brought me a letter from Paris. My entire household was in a state of terror over what had happened to me. They believed the enemy had already reached Malmaison, and that it was impossible for me to return to Paris. The bridge at Neuilly was already barricaded, and Monsieur de Brack, the young man who had talked to me at the masked ball and who was a major in the Lancers of the Guard, had come to inquire anxiously about me and describe the danger we were in at Malmaison since the enemy's outposts were already encircling the capital. I hastened to the Emperor's study to communicate this news to him. He received it very calmly and declared things were not as alarming as people supposed, but that nevertheless it would be more prudent for me and all the other ladies to return to Paris.

"Sire," I replied, "the only person I am worried about is you. You should treat this information more seriously because it comes from a brave young officer."

"My daughter," he answered, "we know what war is. Hurry home and take Madame Bertrand with you, for I can do nothing with her husband so long as she is present."

I urged him to leave at once, to think of the state of rage which animated the hostile troops. "The Prussians are leading the advance," I said to him, "and you have every reason to fear their violence."

"What can they do?"

"Sire, they might go as far as to assault you personally."

"Very well, I shall go then," he answered with an indifferent and resigned air, more to please me than because he realized the extent of the danger. He sent for Monsieur de Résigny, one of the orderlies, and sent him to reconnoiter how far away the enemy were.

Monsieur de Flahaut and Monsieur de Lavallette arrived from Paris and confirmed the news I had received. Then, as though the approach of the foe caused him to put away any idea except the danger which threatened France, the Emperor with an air of deep emotion and a consciousness of what he still could perform addressed these two gentlemen in the following words, which have impressed themselves too deeply on my mind for me to be able to forget them:

"Go to the Provisional Government and tell them that I can still assemble the army, I can halt the enemy's advance and give the Provisional Government time to negotiate, safeguard the interests of France, and make the allied monarchs recognize her rights and the liberty she is about to lose. I promise on my word as general, as citizen and as a soldier to leave the country the same day I shall have saved the capital." After having said this, he dismissed them.[14]

Meanwhile, the orderly officer Résigny, who had been sent to the bridge of Chatou, had returned. He had arrived at the village of Chatou just after the bridge had been blown up in accordance with orders from the minister of war. We saw the flames from our windows, and they proved to us the enemy was really close at hand. The two gentlemen [Flahaut and Lavallette] had scarcely left when I was already anxiously awaiting their return. The delay distressed me, for I had no doubt that the Emperor's offer would be refused, and the danger increased hour by hour. I took him the diamond collar, which he had finally consented to accept. I had arranged

PRINCE LOUIS NAPOLEON
(Later Napoleon III)
Water-Color by Queen Hortense in the
Collection of Prince Napoleon

it and sewn it on a ribbon so that he could wear it as a belt. I attached it myself.

Monsieur de Flahaut was announced. He described how his mission had failed. The Emperor said to him: "Why wouldn't they accept? It was because they still feared me, wasn't it?"

Monsieur de Flahaut replied that the heads of the government feared that the Emperor's presence would prove an added difficulty during the negotiations, and make people doubt their sincerity. He added that he thought the government was also alarmed at the idea of the Emperor once more being in command of his troops, whom he might not consent to abandon.

"Did you repeat faithfully the terms of my promise to leave as soon as I had saved Paris?"

"Yes, Sire."

At this the Emperor with a decided gesture rose from his chair and said: "They refuse. Then let us leave. I have nothing to reproach myself with. I have done my duty to the land. I wished to make a last effort for France. Now she will be sacrificed and placed at the mercy of her enemies."

I embraced him, tears in my eyes. He bade me farewell, urging me again to return immediately to Paris and take Madame Bertrand with me. But she and I resolved that neither of us would leave until we were sure what had become of him.

The Emperor spent his last moments talking privately to his brother Joseph. He had put aside his uniform and put on a gray [15] dress-coat (*frac*). Then General Beker returned from Paris bringing the same reply as that which Monsieur de Flahaut had received, and as his arrival was what everyone was waiting for, the traveling carriages were brought up to the door. The Emperor had with him in his calash, General Beker, General Bertrand and the Duc de Rovigo. In another carriage were Colonel Gourgaud, Messieurs de Montholon,

de Las Cases and Lallemand.[16] Others who accompanied the Emperor, and among whom were Messieurs de Résigny, Planat, Chiappe, Autric, Sainte-Catherine d'Audiffredi, left by another route.

Instead of being as heartrending as it should have been, this parting [17] relieved my soul of a burden that had been weighing on it for a long time. Indeed, I felt that a life which was very precious to me was at last out of danger and free, and would continue to remain so. What a mistake I made! Before returning to Paris I walked down the handsome gallery at Malmaison, where so many precious art objects were collected. These, in addition to my diamonds, were all the fortune that was left me. At that moment it occurred to me for the first time that here was all my children's inheritance, yet I had entirely forgotten to give any orders to have these objects safely stored away. Entirely absorbed by my thoughts regarding the Emperor's fate, how was it possible for me to think of anything else? Now the allied troops were too close at hand to give me time to have these paintings taken down and sent to Paris. I made up my mind to risk losing them, if Fate so decided, and I hastened to rejoin my children.

I set out accompanied by Madame Bertrand, Madame d'Arjuzon and Madame Caffarelli. The latter, although not a member of my household, had come daily to Malmaison to place herself at my disposal, offering to help me in any way that was possible. It was sweet, in these sad moments, to encounter such a spirit of devotion. I was obliged to take a roundabout route to return to Paris, and reenter the capital by way of Saint Cloud, for the bridge at Neuilly was already barricaded. Madame Bertrand kept talking to us all the time about her trip and her fears regarding her children. I suggested taking charge of her little girl, who was ill; but she could not bear the idea of being separated even momentarily from one she loved. I pointed out that, although she was to be pitied on account of the dangers she was exposing herself

to, at the same time people might envy her, because the courage with which she encountered these dangers sprang from a happiness which no political misfortunes could affect.

Many sad thoughts suggested themselves to me in connection with the position in which the Emperor now found himself. He had been the Messiah of the masses, who by his force of character, will-power and military prestige had summoned the people of all countries to share the riches of the universe. He had obtained for them their share of earthly happiness. As Christ had rescued them from moral slavery he had freed them from the bonds which prevented all but a privileged few from enjoying those positions and honors which certain castes for centuries had jealously guarded as their own. It is true that before his ascension to the throne there had been the French Revolution, which had destroyed all social standards, but those excesses, which are necessary in order to clear the air, may in turn, through exhaustion, through hope of benefits too long deferred, through urgent need of rest, lead a nation back to the very conditions against which it rebelled.

It was the Empire which established the preeminence of personal merit over hereditary rank. No one except the Emperor, dictator of the social laws of all Europe, could have wrought such a change. The change had proved a success; it had been a complete one. And now there was cause to fear not only the hatred of strangers, natural enough to be sure, but also the hatred of Frenchmen, ungrateful or deluded. This was what broke my heart; this was what made me ashamed of my compatriots. I asked myself whether there was any class of society that had not benefited by his presence. Although his chief purpose had always been to uplift the masses, and to strengthen the institutions which assured them a true independence, at the same time those rich and

titled men who had plotted his downfall were also indebted to him for their very lives, for having made peace between them and the working classes and for the sense of security and prosperity which sprang from that peace. Was it out of gratitude that they allied themselves with foreign interests in order to overthrow a power whose absence one day they would regret, and which in a sense was their chief protector?

Dawn often found me sunk in these melancholy thoughts, and I remember how any sudden noise would startle me, causing me to fear for the life of the man who had accomplished so much that was good, so much that I found pleasure in remembering in those last tragic hours. I felt that I was still dreaming or that some violent fever had shaken the reason of mankind.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RETURN OF THE BOURBONS. ON THE WAY INTO EXILE (JUNE 29, 1815–JULY 24, 1815)

Public Opinion—The Chamber of Deputies—The Evacuation of Paris —The Queen Is Not Safe in the Rue Cerutti—She Moves to the Rue Taitbout, Then Moves Back—The Emperor of Russia and Hortense— The Queen Is Ordered to Leave France—Her Departure—An Incident at Dijon—At Poligny—Into Exile.

ON my return home I found everyone alarmed as to what had happened to me. People feared I might even have been taken prisoner by the enemy. My children had remained in hiding in a private family. Paris still seemed fairly quiet. Only the upper classes were excited. I, satisfied that I had done my duty to the end, was prepared to wait further events with courage and resignation.

Our troops reformed in the neighborhood of Paris. The army wished to resist under the walls of the capital and save our national honor. The Chamber of Deputies was busy drawing up a constitution, and the Provisional Government meanwhile negotiated with the foreign powers, seeking to prevent the shedding of any more French blood and to insure at least the country's position as a nation. The women I knew met every morning at my house. Each of them had a different idea of what should be done and kept me informed of what Paris was saying. They were all excited and nervous, while I astonished them by my calm. Yet this was easily understandable. Their futures were undecided; mine was settled. I had done no harm, there was no favor I wished to ask for, my only desire was to withdraw from society, and I imagined that nothing was simpler. I listened to

the plans of those about me with that sympathetic interest one extends to one's friends, and I was probably the only one to notice how impossible those plans were. The unanimous wish seemed to be not to have the Bourbons return to power. It was said they would bring back with them new humiliations of our national pride along with a general reactionary policy. It seemed unlikely that Napoleon II would be allowed to reign. One day the Duc d'Orléans would be suggested, the next it would be Emperor Alexander's brother, or a Republic, or the Prince of Orange, or the King of Saxony. In short, everybody picked out the monarch he preferred and offered him the crown of France. Some mentioned Prince Eugène, but I stopped them at once, saying that my brother would never accept a throne to the detriment of the son of his benefactor. I asked my friends to be good enough not to speak of the subject again. General Grenier sent me word that the question had come up in the Chamber of Deputies, but he had felt he was acting in accordance with my wishes and those of my brother in avoiding any further mention of it, or any debate on the subject. I expressed my thanks.

The Provisional Government, too feeble for such a critical moment, felt that France's safety was to be obtained only through negotiations, whereas the army refused indignantly the idea of making any concession to the foreigners. The latter were drawing nearer the capital. Terror reigned. People were being constantly accused of treason. The Duc d'Otrante frequently sent his daughter's governess to see Mademoiselle Cochelet, either to warn me of impending dangers or to inform me of the hopes he entertained. One day she asked to see me personally. She read me a copy of a letter Fouché had just written, I do not remember to whom, for, not seeing any sign of defensive measures being taken or any spirit of decision being displayed, I considered the cause of France already lost. Once more we were surrendering

without a struggle to the foreign invader and unless we were prepared to offer some sort of resistance I felt that all discussions were vain and futile. Consequently I listened to each person's opinions with the completest indifference. I remember, however, that this letter of Fouché was written to combat vehemently any idea of accepting the Duc d'Orléans. He cleverly pointed out that the Duke's accession to the throne would result in new misfortunes for the country generally, and that it would be better to accept, after all, the elder branch of the Bourbons. The letter also stated that Napoleon II was the only ruler who could assure the prosperity of France and European peace.

One day a Monsieur Courtois, a former member of the republican party, called at my house. I did not know who he was. He came as delegate from the colonels commanding the various regiments assembled at La Villette. Their plan was to kidnap the members of the Provisional Government, suspected of being in touch with the Bourbons, and summon the Emperor back to defend his capital. Monsieur Courtois had been sent to see me on behalf of the army to find out if the Emperor had already actually left. I assured my visitor he had, and at the same time did my best to combat an enterprise which might lead to disastrous results. I knew the integrity of the Duc de Vicence, the patriotism of Carnot, and doubted if even Fouché would betray his country. The Emperor having left there was no other man capable of gaining the support of all political parties and saving France. At such moments the gravest danger is that of civic unrest. Without a leader, without unity of purpose what can one accomplish? I heard later that the Emperor had stopped at Rambouillet and spent the night. Was he aware of what the army was planning? Did he expect to be summoned, to be appealed to, to be forced into an attempt to save the country? I fancy so, but at that time, I believed he was already a long way off.

The troops, who were discontented with what was going on, received orders to pass around the capital but not enter it. Stories of pillaging were spread about so as to alarm the Parisians. They were made to believe that French soldiers, whose only idea was to combat the enemy, were more dangerous than the enemy himself. To refute these slanders the generals on their way to the other side of Paris marched through it from end to end in spite of the order not to do so. Their march was an entirely orderly one. All the trained soldiers declared that the Prussians had committed a grave mistake in marching toward Versailles, and that it would be easy to defeat them by making an attack from Saint Denis. The government, still believing its negotiations would be successful and imagining that conditions were the same as in 1814, watched unconcernedly the approach of an enemy who, it thought, shared its delusions. The habit of considering oneself a great nation gives a country a haughty attitude, which it retains in spite of what may happen. Yet if it lacks the energy to defend its rights, this attitude is nothing but an empty sham. If the Chamber, still occupied with the constitution, desired to imitate the stoicism of the Roman Senate it should have also been prepared to imitate its model by receiving in triumph a Consul who had been defeated because he still believed in his country's prowess. The memory of the Emperor's exile, forced on him because he had failed and because the enemy insisted upon it, will always shame those who witnessed it. These liberals, these energetic patriots whom France should honor since they defended so courageously its rights and its liberties, lost their cause because they separated it from that of the one man who could have saved them. To be sure the position was a critical one. Those in office found themselves confronted either with the necessity of accepting again absolute authority or surrendering their country to the foreign invader. They would have done better to place their

confidence in the promises of the victorious warrior. It was the desire for freedom that made them enslave themselves.

I have heard it said often enough, and I cannot deny the fact, that the authority of a legal constitution is preferable to that of a single man, but at this moment the memory of all the great things the Emperor had accomplished filled my mind to the exclusion of everything else. Had he not rescued the country from anarchy and chaos, established a throne founded on the essential equality of man, increased France's fame abroad, reestablished its finances, religion, industry and social order? Had he not accomplished a host of other glorious and useful acts which the nation had benefited by because they were the product of his genius? Yet the man who had done so much was forsaken. He and his few faithful friends found themselves exposed to all sorts of dangers, including the schemes of revenge which the enemy might entertain. Here, indeed, was food for thought. When I yielded to my emotions I accused the French of being ungrateful, unjust, and unstable in their affections. At such times I recalled with acute sorrow the day when, still quite young, I had read a "Life of Hannibal." I was hurt and indignant over his sad fate. The Emperor—he was Consul at the time—said to me, "That is what happens to almost all great men." My mother and I exchanged glances, for already he was rather great himself.

Our position became dangerous. Royalist exiles began to reenter the capital in disguise. Monsieur de Vitrolles had been released from prison by the Duc d'Otrante. General Exelmans, having heard of it, caused him to be again arrested and confined in a room at Vaugirard, where his troops were stationed. The General went in to Paris to spend the evening. When he returned Monsieur de Vitrolles had again escaped. Monsieur Hyde de Neuville compromised in the affair of the infernal machine,[1] but escaping, thanks to the help of the Baron

de Vaux, was now hiding in Paris. He called on Monsieur de Vaux, and told him he would see that I was not harmed if I would sign, and persuade my friends to sign, a paper urging all the generals I knew to go over to the Bourbons. He displayed a list already filled with the names of prominent marshals and generals who had agreed to do so. I replied that everyone was free to do as he pleased, that I would not undertake to influence anyone's opinion or actions, that I had no favors to ask in my own behalf, and that I would not sign.

Meanwhile the French troops were passing through Paris without provoking the least disorder. Many officers came to see me in the evening. I had never seen such a martial spirit as that which animated the younger officers at a time when many of those higher in rank were already making peace with the Bourbons. These older officers considered that the return of the Bourbons to the throne was inevitable, but that whoever the King might be it was the foreigners who were really to be feared. I pitied men whose personal interests blinded them to such an extent. I regretted that I was not a man, for I felt that all was not yet lost. If France only knew how to take advantage of the ardor of all these youths, it could at least defend its national interests and not throw itself blindly on the mercy of the conquerors. But what could a woman do? Arouse people's imagination, lead them into dangers which she could neither share nor control? I should have felt that such an action would be not only rash but criminal. (I was not a queen in France. I was only obeying my impulse as a woman and as a daughter of France. Therefore I forced myself to listen to all sorts of plans, without encouraging the policy of defense which I felt was so urgently needed, but which, since it was in accordance with my personal interests, I was the more reluctant to advise.) At the same time when the Duc de Bassano came to inform me that it had been suggested that the seat of the government be transferred to

Blois, I warmly approved this measure. Everything seemed to me preferable to surrender without conditions to the enemy. From Blois, at least, surrounded by faithful troops it would be possible to obtain certain concessions. But none of these plans came to anything, and I heard nothing further about the matter.

General Exelmans, who was ready to take risks in spite of the orders to be cautious, beat the Prussians near Versailles. In this engagement Colonel de Briqueville, whom I had seen the day before, was seriously wounded. In spite of the pain he was in he wrote me telling me to reassure people who were alarmed and to do what I could to prevent Paris from capitulating. I had nothing to do with the matter. Meanwhile the Prussians drew nearer. Malmaison was almost sacked. It was thought the Emperor was there. Young Monsieur de Brack, who was in command at the bridge of Neuilly, was obliged to charge several times in order to save this house which we had so recently left. It was his courage and devotion that saved the precious objects I had left behind. I admired him enough to be glad to accept this favor from him.

A capitulation, the terms of which were not fully executed, surrendered Paris to the Allies and forced the army to withdraw toward the Loire. I was urged to go there also. Monsieur de Brack came to offer to conduct me there escorted by his entire regiment and promised to protect me from all possible dangers. But was I the sort of woman who follows an army? It was only from the allied sovereigns that I could hope to obtain the means for passing through their lines without difficulty, in order to reach Switzerland where I wished to live.

The English ruled Paris. The army had left. Louis XVIII was approaching, and still people clung to the emblems of the Empire. The outburst of enthusiasm for the royal cause, which was to have become also that of the nation, failed to materialize. People believed, or

said they believed, that it was I alone who was responsible for its non-appearance. Consequently the royalists and the foreigners hated and feared me. Some excuse had to be found by which so many people's wounded pride could explain the silence that greeted the return of the Bourbons.

The King was at Saint Denis.[2] I was walking about my garden when I saw cabs go by filled with wild-looking men who, when they recognized me, made threatening gestures and shouted insults. They seemed on the point of getting out and attacking me. The Duc d'Otrante warned me that he was doing everything he could to protect me, but that I was in serious danger, that I must be very careful as people were more actively hostile to me than ever. This was why the day following the King's entry into Paris, some young members of his body-guard, having distinguished themselves by wrecking a café, set out toward my house, doubtless to do the same there. The police and the National Guard managed to disperse them. Without further hesitation I left my home and rented another residence.[3] I did this under an assumed name, not wishing to compromise any of my friends. During the interval between the landing of the Emperor and his arrival in Paris I had not felt worried about this, for hope of his success had allowed me to believe I should later be able to reward an act of faithfulness; but now my presence could only be dangerous. I therefore shut myself up for several days alone with my children, and received no visitors. The Prince of Schwarzenberg having established his military headquarters at my house, I felt I could return to it in safety. I was convinced that I no longer had anything to fear from the royalists, but their hatred of me still continued. If workmen in the suburbs made seditious remarks I was alleged to have paid them to do so. Red carnations were at that time considered my emblem. I was recognized going about on foot in the most out-of-the-way corners of the city. In short, the

defeated cause that had been abandoned by all, that lacked an army or support of any kind, still made the armed hosts of Europe tremble; and it was upon a woman that the leagued sovereigns fixed their eyes.

The army had reassembled beside the Loire. Monsieur de Flahaut was already there. Monsieur de La Bédoyère called to say good-by to me. He could not bear to be separated from his wife, who had been entirely won over to his ideas. When I expressed my astonishment that he was still in Paris he answered: "You are right. I must not allow myself to be captured. I should be reprieved on account of my wife's family. I do not want to owe them anything. France is liable to suffer grievous wounds, but all her defenders are not dead, and I wish to join them in order to help free her from her enemies."

The Emperor of Russia reentered Paris. The protection he had offered me in the past was now more necessary than it had ever been. He was the only man I could hope would defend me, and although it would have been natural enough for me to ask him to do so, I felt too downcast, too broken-hearted by my country's misfortunes to receive him again as a friend. Indeed, I hesitated whether I should receive him at all. My doubt did not last long. He did not make the slightest inquiry about me, left me all alone in the midst of the dangers which surrounded me, and seemed to wish to humiliate me. One day, when he and his staff had come to see the Prince of Schwarzenberg, he did not even come up to my apartment, where he had been so eager to call in the past. Instead of being offended by this disdainful attitude I felt sorry for him. Thus the same man whose attentions had at one time involved me in so many difficulties now left me at the mercy of any incident that might occur. He pitilessly abandoned me to the attacks of those against whom he might have been my sole defender. I could not help feeling for him, and regretting that political mat-

ters had so changed his generous feelings, but his conduct could not humiliate me in the least. My rôle seemed the nobler of the two.

In a very short time I had improved my knowledge of politics. I began to be able to appreciate the truth, to recognize when a cause was just and right. My own cause, its grandeur, and the misfortunes which pursued it rendered it still dearer and more sacred to me. While I maintained an attitude of dignified isolation, I could not be indifferent to certain phrases of a conversation which the young Polish woman Madame Walewska had with the Emperor of Russia and which she repeated to me. She had been asking him to take care of Madame Mère, of whom the Allies had not been sufficiently considerate.

"What do you want me to do?" he had asked. "Surely I cannot be expected to keep on bothering about all the members of that family. See what happened in the case of Queen Hortense. I treated her as a friend in 1814. And it is she who is the cause of all the misfortunes which have since befallen France."

Did he really believe what he said? Or was it an excuse for his not seeing me and for his attitude toward me? Whatever may have been the cause of his making such charges against me they aroused my indignation. It was inconceivable that I should be accused of having provoked all our disasters, I who had never done anything to harm a single Frenchman. Was it because I had cared for the Emperor during the last days he spent at Malmaison? I was proud to have done so. Who would dare blame me for my conduct? I gathered up all the letters I had received from the Emperor of Russia and, sending them back to him, I wrote that since he had taught me to doubt the sincerity of the expressions of friendship and admiration they contained I no longer wished to keep them in my possession. He immediately dispatched Monsieur Boutiaguine to see me, with a rather

severe reply concerning the part I had played in politics, which he said was unworthy of a woman. The Emperor cited as proof of his charges the note I had left with Monsieur Boutiaguine. He added that my remarks about peace in my conversation with him were presumably due to a simulated hostility toward the Emperor Napoleon.

The Emperor of Russia had mistaken my general dislike of rank and position for an indication of a special spirit of opposition toward the man who had conferred them on me. But his minister addressed me in quite other terms. He spoke of the suspicions against me which had been sown and fostered in his master's mind and of the admiration with which the latter still regarded me. He added that the King of France had begged the Emperor of Russia on his knees not to see me. I confess that the idea of the King of France imploring the Russian Emperor on his knees not to go to see a woman made me smile. "The Emperor's ministers," continued Monsieur Boutiaguine, "and the princes who are his allies constantly approach him for the protection he offered you and your family. When you returned his letters it wounded him deeply. Nevertheless your Majesty need not worry; everything will quiet down in a little while."

"All that I ask is permission to leave," I answered. "The only things I need are passports."

"But do you not owe it to the memory of his friendship, which you have just offended, to send him a brief reply? And should not this reply be written in such a way that he can show it to his advisors?"

"Very well, then I shall write to the Emperor. I still desire his respect and wish him to know the truth. As for what his advisors or anybody else may think, I am quite indifferent to that."

I did write a long letter, in which I described in detail some of the causes for the discontent of the French—the only reason for the Emperor's unaided return. I denied

the charge that I had done anything toward it myself. I admitted I had made a mistake, that of remaining in France in 1814, and of forgetting the bitterness of the hatred which surrounded me. I corrected his impression that I was unhappy because I had done my duty toward the man who had been as a father to me. I ended by saying that I was about to withdraw and lead a secluded life, far from society and its unjust criticisms, and that I pitied him for being obliged to remain on one of those lofty social pinnacles to which truth can never attain. I had another letter from him, containing about the same ideas as the first. In it he who had been the first to inform me of the King's enmity toward me and to say I need not pay a visit of thanks now wrote that having been allowed by the King's kindness to remain in France I should not have presented myself at the court of Emperor Napoleon. I felt that such illogical reasoning did not even deserve a reply, and I made none.

A newspaper stated I had called on the Emperor of Russia. I considered such a remark insulting, for I should have felt I was committing an unworthy deed to go to see him when he was acting as an oppressor of my family and my country. I was anxiously seeking means to deny this report when denial of it came from another source before I could do so. The day after the first note had appeared, a second one was published, saying in a haughty and official tone that it was not true that I had been received by the Emperor of Russia. This was a signal for all those animosities which the arrival of my former defender had silenced momentarily to break out anew. Everyone felt it his duty and his privilege to condemn me. Moreover the hand of a woman who had once been a friend, not satisfied with striking me herself, armed others against me. Madame de Vitrolles headed my enemies and went about everywhere spreading the most absurd pieces of scandal. Her purpose was doubtless to revenge herself for once having sought and ob-

tained my help, and to make other people forget the fact. Monsieur de Vitrolles, although his wife when she was seeking my protection had assured me of his neutrality in regard to me, now printed my name in the Moniteur on the list of those accused of being responsible for France's misfortunes. Even the police went so far as to bribe one of my mother's former servants, now employed by the aides-de-camp of the Prince of Schwarzenberg, to relate the most filthy stories about me.

My children still remained hidden in the house I had rented. My sole thought was how to have them reach a spot where they would be safe. Such a place was only to be found outside of France, and I did not know by what means to get them out of the country. The idea of having them go to Switzerland alone with their nurse and a *valet de chambre* occurred to me. They might be passed off as the children of these servants. Monsieur Gabriel Delessert, who had a Swiss servant, managed to secure a passport bearing the name of this man and his wife. He sent it to me. But renewed alarms [4] the reasons for which I was unaware of, caused the allied sovereigns to decide I must leave Paris immediately. Monsieur Boutiaguine, greatly alarmed, came to tell me that numerous groups of men wearing red carnations were in the habit of assembling at night on the boulevard. I was accused of instigating this movement. Monsieur Decazes,[5] at that time prefect of police, issued an order forbidding my remaining any longer in Paris. Monsieur Müffling, the governor of Paris on behalf of the Allies, sent for Monsieur de Vaux, informed him of the danger I was in and of the fact that it would be necessary for me to have an armed escort as far as the gates.[6] He feared an attempt would be made to assassinate me and did not wish the blame for such a crime to fall on the Allies. All the bureaus of the police were quite anxious to have me die, but would not kill me themselves. This made their position a rather delicate one. I refused

any escort except that of one of the Prince of Schwarzenberg's aides-de-camp to accompany me through the entire Austrian army. My passports for Switzerland were sent me, bearing the signatures of all the French and foreign authorities. This encouraged me to have my children come back to me. With this protection I felt they were in less danger with me than they would have been elsewhere.

At the moment I was entering my carriage I received word that at a meeting held at the Pavillon de Flore orders about me similar to those given Monsieur de Maubreuil regarding the Queen of Westphalia in 1814 had been issued. Members of the royal body-guard were said to have left ahead of me with instructions to ambush me and I was advised not to take any valuables with me.[7] Impressed by the similarity between the two orders, with which as I have already related I was familiar, it was natural that I should feel alarmed for the lives of those who were so dear to me. But what could I do? If I sent my children off alone just after they had returned to my house, they would be in danger of being followed and kidnaped without having the protection which the presence of an Austrian officer offered me. Thus it was clear that they would still be safest beside their mother. The need of protecting them, the conviction that I could rely on no one but myself had stimulated all my faculties and strung me up to a high degree of nervous tension. I seemed joyous rather than terrified, indifferent rather than deeply moved, at what was taking place. My brain alone was allowed to express itself. I had stifled the impulses of my heart, which might have led me to give way to one of those moments of weakness so fatal in times of danger or uncertainty. All the members of my household assembled to bid me farewell. I received them in a perfectly calm manner, as though I were to return the next day. I know this attitude was a surprise to them, but I dreaded giving way to my emotion. Consequently

I hastened to drive off,[8] accompanied by my children, abandoning myself to the course of events whatever they might be.

As we crossed the boulevards I noticed at intervals men on horseback. I heard afterwards (it was the Prussian governor of Paris who told it to Monsieur de Vaux) that this was done in order to protect me. But there was no sign of disorder as I passed. The first night I spent at Bercy, in the house of Madame de Nicolay, who had placed it at my disposal. The next morning I found myself in the midst of the enemies' troops. Another carriage was changing horses at the same time. An Englishman, not knowing who I was, said to me: "Madame, I have just been stopped by a French regiment of irregular troops. They robbed me. You are in danger."

"They certainly were not French," I replied promptly. "Such a thing is impossible." Hearing these remarks the aide-de-camp, who was in the second carriage with Monsieur de Marmol, suggested he buy a pair of pistols and come and sit beside the coachman of my carriage. He pointed out all the risks I was exposed to in the midst of these undisciplined troops. "As long as they are French, I have no reason to fear them," I replied.

The idea that fighting might take place under my very eyes made me tremble and seemed to me far more terrifying than the sight of regiments in disorder which my name alone would have sufficed to recall to a sense of their duties. Hence without letting the aide-de-camp know I gave orders to my *valet de chambre,* who rode beside me, to have my carriage leave the posting-house as soon as it had been reharnessed, without waiting for the second in which were seated Monsieur de Marmol and the Austrian officer. Thus I drove off first unattended and with my two children. I preferred not to have a foreign officer with me at the spot where we were told we might encounter the irregular troops. Fortunately all we encountered were a few soldiers in distress,

to whom I gave some money. I learned at the next posting-station that the troops whose presence had caused alarm were on their way to rejoin the army on the Loire. Meeting an Englishman on the way, they considered him fair game, but all the harm they had done him was to make him pay a ransom of fifty louis to buy drinks for the men. The peasants who told me this story laughed about it and considered it a fair piece of retaliation against the enemy.

The third day of my journey, as I was about to enter Dijon, a horseman stationed on the road and carrying a pistol came up and stopped my carriage. He was an Austrian outpost. The aide-de-camp gave his name, and we proceeded on our way. As I was going up the stairs of the inn at Dijon I heard a woman who was looking out through a half-open door exclaim, "There she is!" I paid no attention to this. The aide-de-camp, Monsieur le Comte Edouard de Woyna, presented the Austrian captain in command of the outpost to me. The captain offered to give me military escort. This I declined, not wishing to have any special honors shown me. After Monsieur de Woyna had gone out to see the city and while I was talking with the Austrian captain, three French officers entered my private drawing-room. They were pale and evidently profoundly impressed with the importance and danger of their mission, which was that of arresting a woman and her two children.

"Madame," they said, "our orders are that you are not to leave this spot."

"Very well, gentlemen, then I shall remain here," I replied quite coolly.

"Who gives orders here, I should like to know," exclaimed the Austrian officer. "I am in command. Madame is free to leave whenever she pleases."

On hearing this answer, that of a person in authority uttered in a tone he was only too well entitled to use, the French officers withdrew.

They tried to provoke a hostile demonstration against me outside the inn. My courage nearly failed me. Was it possible? Enemies taking my part, Frenchmen acting as my foes. For the pleasure of persecuting me they had placed themselves in a humiliating position and allowed themselves to be reminded that they had been defeated. This painful impression was soon banished by shouts of "Long live the King!" which echoed under my windows. The crowd was composed of old men, children and many society women of Dijon. Monsieur de Woyna when he returned sent out a couple of Austrians to disperse the throng. He did this although I asked him not to, saying: "I do not mind hearing these shouts. At least this time no one will say I paid for them." I must say, moreover, that the working classes seemed to sympathize with me and looked derisively at the fury displayed by my enemies.

A young man of the royal body-guard named Monsieur de Nansouty had arrived at Dijon the day before. He was the head of the movement. He did not leave the inn but walked up and down before it, with a long sword which he let rattle as he walked as though this conferred a more martial air on its owner, and as though this noise indicated the respect with which the owner of such a weapon should be treated. His companions kept guard over my carriage and drank together in one of the anterooms. Their remarks were at times most alarming. Consequently Monsieur de Woyna, Monsieur de Marmol and my servants were on the alert. The Austrian advance guard left the city, their places being taken by another detachment of the same troops. Immediately the young men hastened to the officer in command of the new detachment to inform him that, in accordance with orders issued by the Court of France, I was to be held as prisoner, and that a Frenchman in disguise, since he was dressed as an Austrian, had prevented them from carrying out these instructions. The commanding officer,

much embarrassed, called at the inn. He turned out to be a personal friend of Monsieur de Woyna and embraced him instead of placing him under arrest. It was agreed that the Austrian troops should use force if necessary to insure my passage through the town. Monsieur de Nansouty declared to Monsieur de Woyna, "I shall dispatch a messenger to Paris. Your behavior shall be known. You have prevented me from carrying out my orders. The idea of letting a woman escape who did us so much harm. What a terrible thing to do!"

A notice[9] declaring that I was a person who had brought misfortune on France was posted in all the streets. My position became every instant more critical. Fortunately, the French General Liger-Belair, who commanded a division, arrived during the night. Monsieur de Woyna hastened to see him and explained his mission. The French General was himself embarrassed to know how to restrain such violent passions and check the men, who seemed to have received positive instructions. He and Monsieur de Woyna, who was resolved to use the Austrian troops if necessary, arranged that a review should be held at the same time as my departure. In this way the royalist officers and the members of the *garde d'honneur* would be forced to give up their surveillance of my movements and return to their regular posts. Monsieur de Nansouty, member of the royal body-guard, who had just arrived from Paris and consequently had no staff appointment, and who doubtless was the person against whom I had been warned before leaving Paris, was the only one to remain behind to witness my departure. He could not conceal his disappointment to see his prey thus escape him. As I came downstairs to enter the carriage, escorted by Monsieur de Woyna between a double row of Austrians, Monsieur de Nansouty again reproached the Austrian aide-de-camp for having prevented the royalists from revenging themselves on me.

Four Austrians on horseback acted as my escort. The townspeople silently looked at me with an affectionate interest, and on the door-steps of several shops I even saw some people hold out their arms toward me in unrestrainable emotion. At Dôle a more energetic demonstration in my favor took place. A crowd surrounded my carriage throwing me red carnations, and men and women wept as I passed. "Ain't it shameful" (*c'est-y pas endévant*), exclaimed one of them dressed as a peasant, "that the good leave and the wicked stay?" Another came up beside my carriage and asked if I was treated as a prisoner, if the Austrian officer was kind to me. I hastened to assure him I was quite satisfied with the care that was being taken of me and that the presence of the officer was most useful to me. Thus at Dijon he had defended me and here I helped protect him.

Near Poligny I met a group of officers who had just surrendered a town. They surrounded my carriage and wept. Several proposed to accompany me, but I declined. I attempted to calm them and show them the necessity of accepting the melancholy end.

"Yes, we must submit," said a man standing at the gate of a farm and wearing the blouse of a wagoner, "but our day will come, and then it will be the awakening of a lion."

At last I reached the frontier. I was about to leave the soil of France. Formerly, in the days of my prosperity, I should have wept for the country I was leaving behind. Now that I had exile forced upon me I was almost glad to leave. In the bitterness of my grief I considered France ungrateful and unjust. She had insulted, after having deserted, the man who had done so much for her. She repulsed those who loved her so dearly. I felt an atmosphere of hatred and of revenge all about me. I felt I could breathe more freely on foreign soil. I was wrong. The passions, the forces which were hostile to me were such as neither forgive nor forget, nor do they

ever diminish. Their animosity has pursued me everywhere. I soon realized I was wrong in accusing my country. She too was suffering, she too was a victim of those fears and jealousies which had been aroused by her years of power. Everywhere one felt the hand of the enemy; everywhere his clutch was tightening. Having understood this, I admit it became agreeable to me to limit my complaints to the conduct of foreigners toward me. I became proud of having my share in the persecutions which were inflicted on a great nation, but which could not subdue it.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WANDERING QUEEN (JULY 25, 1815–DECEMBER 7, 1815)

At Geneva—The Emperor Napoleon's Mother and Cardinal Fesch—The Duc and Duchesse de Bassano—Madame de Staël at Aix—Monsieur de Flahaut—The Austrians at Chambéry—Murat—The Letters of Monsieur de Flahaut—The Departure of Prince Napoleon Louis—Monsieur de Flahaut's Reply—The Queen Wishes to Leave Aix—At Prégny—At Baden—Letter from Hortense to Eugène—Arrival at Constance.

I ARRIVED at Geneva and settled in the suburb of Sècheron, close to my little country house, which was not yet furnished. How happy I should have been to enjoy the rest that this quiet spot seemed to offer me. I already imagined myself installed there. I thought of how I would arrange the house inside and out. No hateful passions would dare enter. My lot would be completely calm, completely peaceful. Alas, this dream vanished swiftly. I could not take my mind off my cruel uncertainty as to the Emperor's fate or what was happening to the army of the Loire, that last hope of a defeated country. My imagination kept conjuring up visions of the dangers which I felt menaced those dear to me. Is the egotist not sometimes to be envied—the person so wrapped up in himself that he never cares about what may befall others? A thousand fears cannot disturb his peace of mind as long as he himself is safe.

And yet how well-founded were my alarms! I learned what had befallen the Emperor. How grievous it was that he should have escaped the enemies who were leagued against him only to fall into the clutches of the most stubborn of them all! Fortune had saved his life only to lead him into captivity! I read also on the list

of those who had been killed or exiled the names of my friends. My own name was not among them, but I was in almost as great a danger as my friends were. Although I had arrived at Geneva with passports signed by the allied powers and even by the King of France, I was not allowed either to remain there or to go on. Since it was impossible for me to go back, what was I to do? Monsieur de Woyna addressed himself to the local authorities at Geneva. Speaking on behalf of his sovereign he declared that they were responsible for my safety and that I must be allowed to wait there at least until he had received an answer from Paris. He came to see me to explain this new complication. I received the news with an apparent air of calm which surprised him so much that he said to Monsieur de Marmol that Frenchwomen did not take anything seriously. My life was in danger. He was not sure what steps to take to safeguard it. Nevertheless I could still smile. Informed of his displeasure I sent for him again, thanked him for all he had done for me and advised him in future to learn to judge Frenchwomen better and not mistake resignation for thoughtlessness or frivolity.

Cardinal Fesch and his sister, the Emperor's mother, arrived at Geneva. Their passports were for Italy. The local authorities forced Madame Mère to continue her journey in spite of her advanced age and her misfortunes. These misfortunes had not, however, broken her spirit, for she replied to an Austrian aide-de-camp who accompanied her: "Well, sir, in spite of the unrelenting animosity of the allied rulers toward Emperor Napoleon I am prouder to be his mother than I should be to be the mother of your Emperor, the Emperor of Russia and all the kings in the world." I displayed my sincere affection for her, and the memory of what I had been able to do for the Emperor at Malmaison had, I believed, already made her approve of me. From then on she never forgot that I was one of her children. But I did not even have the

satisfaction of being able to help her by accompanying her on her journey. My fate remained undecided, to be settled by anyone who wished to harm me.

A man in great distress, who had been robbed of his belongings by hostile soldiers and reduced to a state of the most abject misery, came to see me. He had been seeking to escape that death to which he had been doomed by the inclusion of his name on the first list of those who were to be executed. Now utterly discouraged, he was about to go back to France and give himself up. It was General Ameil. He appeared before me in the last stages of despair. Knowing that I was watched I feared he might be arrested if he continued with me. I remembered the passport bearing a Swiss name which I had intended to use for my children, and I hastened to give it to him, along with other aid. I thus saved his life and I was so pleased at having done so that I momentarily forgot my own difficult situation.

I also received the visit of the Duc de Bassano and the Duchess. The Duchess, sensitive and temperamental as she was, could not bear the idea of seeing me living like this, abandoned by all, alone with my children and almost a prisoner of the Swiss government. She forgot her own lot in pitying mine.

Finally, in response to the urgent request of the French Ambassador, Monsieur Auguste de Talleyrand, repeated orders from the Swiss Diet obliged me to leave Swiss territory in spite of passports signed by the ambassador's royal master. Mademoiselle Cochelet, whom I had left in Paris for a few days to give her time to attend to her private business affairs, now joined me together with Abbé Bertrand. Mademoiselle Cochelet left her family and her country in order to devote herself to me. She was the only one of my attendants who remained for me, as I would not have dreamed of asking any of my ladies in waiting to accompany me; they were too attached to France by bonds of wealth, social position or family.

Driven out of Switzerland I did not know in what direction I should be allowed to turn my steps. Monsieur de Woyna, who did not himself know what advice to give me, proposed that he conduct me back to France and leave me at Bourg until he had been able to go to Paris and secure further instructions. While in this dilemma I decided to go to Aix and wait there for my fate to be decided.

I should have liked before leaving to see Madame de Staël, who was living not far away. I knew she had said, speaking of the Emperor: "I cannot understand the conduct of this man whom I had considered great. He leaves his troops, he tries to escape. What a pitiful ending!" Perhaps a few moments' conversation would have been enough to convince her that he had never been greater than when fortune failed him, but the dignity of my present position made it impossible to make any advances toward her. Moreover, what does all the reasoning in the world amount to if one judges in accordance with one's political bias? Then too I felt that Napoleon could get along very well without the approval of Madame de Staël.

I had chosen Aix with the idea that some memories of me might have remained there. The loss of my friend had made the spot a dear and sacred one to me. It would awake sad recollections, but I did not shun melancholy. I had a hospital there; I had helped the poor and this wins one more gratitude than helping the rich. I realized this by the way the townspeople welcomed me. Once more I felt I was on friendly soil.[1]

Monsieur de Woyna left me to return to Paris and inquire what the Powers had decided in regard to my future. Monsieur Appel, one of the Prince of Schwarzenberg's aides-de-camp, who had joined us with my other carriages, remained with me. Young Comte de Woyna was remarkably handsome and was an extremely fine conversationalist. Monsieur de Metternich had

trained him to be a diplomat, and he had great natural talents for this career. He was able to act any part, but as he was too young as yet to know how to conceal his feelings, his vanity caused him to show off that ability by which he hoped to make his fortune. The choice of him as my escort was a sufficient indication of the Austrian policy. Indeed Monsieur de Metternich had already said in Paris, "The young man who will act as Queen Hortense's escort resembles the hero of a romantic love story." Although his pupil might have been the hero of a novel, should he have forgotten that I was not that type of heroine? Perhaps the Powers considered this a good means of luring me into Austria. This idea has occurred to me since, but I have never had any direct evidence of the fact. Consequently I may be wrong.

"Madame," said Monsieur de Woyna as he was leaving, "I understand now how mistaken the general opinion of you is. People do not know that you possess this spirit of resignation, this ineffable gentleness, which I have been able to judge myself. For your own good I shall not say what I think of you. People would declare I had fallen under your spell. You can trust me. I shall wind up your business affairs and I shall return to conduct you where you wish to retire."

As a matter of fact I heard some time afterwards that he was taking my part with much zeal but in a way which amused me greatly. He told everybody that I was incapable of having done what I was accused of, that I was not nearly clever enough to have done so. I considered this expedient an excellent one and was grateful to him for it.

The Piedmontese troops were occupying Savoy. The day after my arrival at Aix a Piedmontese officer, rather coarse in his appearance, appeared at my house with orders not to let me out of his sight. He insisted in observing these instructions with such a surly obstinacy that Monsieur Appel lost his temper and was about to demand

an explanation for his conduct. He thought it best, however, to refer instead to the officer in command at Chambéry. He called on the latter and explained that as long as I was under his protection he would not allow such treatment. The Piedmontese commander was profuse in his apologies, threw all the blame on his subordinate and at once recalled him. Freed of this surveillance I was also indebted at the time to the protection of Monsieur Finot, whom the King of France had just reappointed prefect of Chambéry. Monsieur Finot was on the alert for those dangers by which the emissaries of the royalists sought to ensnare my footsteps. His watchful attention contributed a great deal to my peace of mind. The prefect was related to the Duchesse de Bassano. He had kept his post in 1814. When the Emperor landed from Elba Monsieur Finot remembered only the last oath of allegiance he had sworn, and returned to Paris without doing anything to prevent the Emperor's advance, but without giving it any material support. The Duchesse de Bassano with her customary impetuosity refused to receive him. I took his part. He remembered this, and when he returned to his post the opportunity of making himself useful to me presented itself.

One evening, to my utter surprise, whom should I see enter my drawing-room but Monsieur de Flahaut! The Army of the Loire had capitulated and been disbanded by Marshal Macdonald. Monsieur de La Bédoyère, yielding to a desire to see his wife once more, had risked a journey to Paris, where he had not escaped the snares of the police, who had been waiting for him for a long time. He was arrested. Monsieur Lavallette, who could not believe that he was guilty of a crime unless it was one which all France had committed at the same time, had refused to leave his wife, who was about to have a child. He had been thrown into prison. Monsieur de Flahaut had left his cousin La Bédoyère on arriving in Paris. He came to Aix for the purpose of putting his

life at my disposal. I pointed out to him that my present position was such as to compromise him, and that at the same time his presence would injure my reputation. It would be advisable, therefore, for him to withdraw until the time came when, more firmly established somewhere, I could again surround myself with my friends. He realized the necessity of making this sacrifice and decided to take up his residence some little distance off, but where he could hear from me regularly. Although this was scarcely a separation I was troubled by forebodings, and our parting was more painful than any of those which had preceded it. A few days later the newspapers referred to this trip of Monsieur de Flahaut, and in political circles it was spoken of as an example of the way in which I was surrounded by a large number of officers from the Army of the Loire, attracted by the prominence of my position. My formidable staff was actually composed of Monsieur de Marmol, with a weak constitution and lacking in decision, and Abbé Bertrand, whose profession and temperament were not of a precisely martial character.

The troops at Lyons were commanded by the Austrian General Roxhmans. He sent me a letter by one of his aides-de-camp. In it he placed himself at my service, as long as I remained on his territory. He felt that he must see I did not seek to escape. His real purpose, however, was to warn the Austrian aide-de-camp Monsieur Appel that emissaries from Paris were preparing to attempt to assassinate me and my children. The General's aide-de-camp urged Monsieur Appel to redouble his vigilance. As I had every reason to believe that General Roxhmans was correct, and as furthermore the events that were taking place throughout southern France justified his alarm only too well, it would have been natural for me to be terrified at the news of this danger. But I could not believe in the existence of a plot against me, and in spite of the incident at Dijon I was unable to conceive that my enemies were capable of planning to murder a woman

and her two children. Therefore I still remained calm.

Terrible news suddenly reached us. Monsieur de La Bédoyère had been shot. Another friend lost to us. No one had pleaded his cause. In the past we had not thus abandoned the Rivières and the Polignacs, and La Bédoyère, at least, had never tried to assassinate anyone as had been the case with them. Unfortunate young man! How high his ideals had been, how ardent his patriotism! How devoted he was to his country, how unselfish in his affections! By his death France lost one of her best citizens and I a true friend. I felt myself guilty of having scarcely replied to his generous sentiments toward me. Had he not well deserved that I should bestow all my confidence unreservedly on him? Thus well-founded self-reproaches mingled with my regrets.

About the same time I heard of the death of Murat. What an end for a man who had been king! What an example for the masses! Gloom seemed to surround me. The only means by which I managed at times to dissipate my low spirits was to visit my Sisters of Charity. (The sight of the suffering of others calms one's own. One believes that it is the lot of all and resigns oneself to it.) I asked the Sisters to pray for those who were left me, and I had the consoling idea that they were so pure that their petitions must surely be granted.

Since Monsieur de Flahaut's departure several letters addressed to him had come back from the Army of the Loire. To forward them to him at Lyons, where he had withdrawn, might be dangerous for him. On the other hand they contained perhaps news which it was important he should receive. I had enjoyed his confidence and felt that in opening them I was committing no indiscretion. What a shock it was to read the passionate sentences of a woman who appeared to have claims on his affections and who also flattered herself that she possessed his love.[2] At that instant all other grief disappeared.

My country, my friends, my fears, the danger I was in—all vanished. Only one idea filled my soul: I had been deceived! And by whom and under what circumstances? How could I be expected to resist this new affliction? My first impulse was to bid him an eternal farewell; my second thought was that he was himself unhappy. Perhaps he found himself abandoned by a person who had cared only for his fortune. Should I, the friend of all those who were wretched, also desert him? Would not such an act on my part make him desperate? And should I not be to blame? Moreover, had I not demanded too high a degree of perfection from a man? If he had really loved someone else, if he had suffered to be obliged to hide it from me, if I had stood in the way of his attaining a complete happiness, ought I not forgive him? But I kept repeating to myself: Why did he deceive me? A man does not know how completely he may be loved by a pure heart. God seems to have formed certain tender and loving souls for Himself. If they are deaf to his voice of Divine Love which fills their minds, and seek to find satisfaction elsewhere, they only encounter difficulties, suffering and misunderstanding.

After having for some time surrendered myself to all the violent emotions of my heart and all the disordered fancies of my mind, I managed to summon up what little force was left me, and wrote Monsieur de Flahaut. In this letter I alternately expressed my sympathy and contempt for him. The letter ended by expressing the hope he would return to the woman whose love must be indeed precious to him since he had sacrificed a friendship such as mine in its favor. I promised to remain his friend, but only on one condition, that he tell me the whole truth. Having completed the effort necessary to write this letter, I sank into a profound lethargy. The courage which had not succumbed to material misfortunes now failed me completely. I had been wounded in the heart, and that was where I was the most sensitive. I could not eat any-

thing without fainting away. I was carried up to the mountains and there I remained for five hours without saying a word.

This condition which resembled a living death suddenly vanished on the arrival of Monsieur Briatte, my husband's agent. A chamberlain accompanied him, and both came to take my elder son away from me on behalf of his father. My misfortunes had reached their height. Thus I was about to lose my dearest consolation. And at this of all moments! Impossible though it may seem I consented to give up my son. In spite of the fact that to do so broke my heart I agreed to surrender the guardianship I had so fiercely striven to obtain in the courts of law. And why? Oh, mystery of a mother's love! How could I resist since I had only misery and misfortune to offer him? He left me.

Overcome by so many blows falling upon me simultaneously, I felt my moral energy give way under the shock. Nothing mattered any longer. I felt that my life and my strength were ebbing away little by little. To be sure the newspapers and political pamphlets described how active I still was, and I was surprised to find that other people still believed I was alive when I had ceased to exist so far as my personal interests were concerned.

I received an answer from Monsieur de Flahaut. The intensity of his despair alarmed me. He regretted he had not been one of those heroes who laid down their lives for our cause on the field of Waterloo. He wished in spite of all the dangers it would involve to come and explain matters to me, to seek to secure my forgiveness. I gave strict orders that he was not to do so. His grief touched me and aroused my sympathy. He swore in the most touching manner that his heart had never ceased to be attached to me. That was not enough. I should have believed him. I should have pitied him, I should still have loved him, if he had had the courage to admit, "I love someone else."

Such a statement would at least have given me a sense of security, whereas the renewal of his vows of tender devotion aroused so many conflicting sentiments that my sufferings were increased. It was in vain that the thought of his despair would occasionally intervene and moderate their intensity. The charm had vanished once and for all. He had deceived me. I could forgive, but I could not forget. I feel grateful to Providence that at this time, when my life was still necessary to my children, I should have happened to be at Aix-les-Bains. It was undoubtedly the waters there which relaxed the tension of my nerves and saved my life. Then too the care my younger son required reminded me of duties I seemed too inclined to forget. He was naturally delicate, and his health was still further upset by the grief of seeing his brother leave us.[3] I vowed not to succumb, for I was a mother and no one can take a mother's place. But to live one must have courage and strength. I sought both everywhere and refused to despair. I frequently went to see my Sisters of Charity and my hospital.

One day a woman was brought in who was extremely ill. It was impossible to open the windows of her sick-room. Suffocated by the odor I stopped at the door, but was ashamed to do so since the Sisters had not left her bedside. I made an effort to conquer my almost overpowering physical repulsion. I succeeded and I remained beside the sick person as long as was necessary. This incident, insignificant in itself, taught me in a few seconds where real merits and real courage are to be found here below. These saintly women possessed both to a supreme degree. I compared myself to them and discovered how little I amounted to. What right had I to be always bewailing my fate? Did I deserve the happiness that so many other persons lacked? If I had fancied that I deserved it more than others, was that not a sign of undue pride? Heaven had given me a sensitive heart in order that I might sympathize with other people,

a high rank in order that I might help them. What had I done with these gifts? I had made gifts of money which did not matter to me because I was well off; I had protected those who were in distress, but their thanks were due those who had called my attention to their ills rather than to me. It is true I had never refused to help anyone who was in need of assistance, but I had only cared for those to whom my attention was called. I did not seek them out for myself. No, I waited to be asked rather than volunteer my assistance. I gave orders to have alms distributed instead of distributing them personally. My kindness had been wholly passive; and what right had I to expect others to be more perfect than I was myself?

Absorbed by my unhappy love-affair, which was the more violent because I was obliged to combat and conquer it, I had only lived for one man. I had received the punishment I deserved. My friends, my relatives, all those who have been dependent on me and who have sympathized with me, you are right to complain, to consider that I am ungrateful, and to overwhelm me with your reproof. Then, as though these reproaches had awakened me after a long swoon, I sent some people presents, others long and affectionate letters. I wished to love everyone in order no longer to confine my affection to one only. But the relief I sought most ardently was that offered by the religion which teaches us so well how to be happy by seeking constantly to bring happiness to others and by abandoning our fate in the hands of God. "No, no," I declared, as I pressed my son impulsively in my arms, "I will not let myself waste away. I can still do good. When grief overwhelms us it seems as though our soul steeps itself in it complacently. We repulse everything that might remind us of life." In these heart-breaking moments I almost forgot that I still had a brother, when suddenly, while I was worrying over what was to be my fate, I received a proof of his affection.

He did not know my address, and therefore sent a letter to someone he knew who lived near Aix, asking for news about me. This mark of sympathy revived my courage.

Monsieur de Flahaut sent me a detailed story of his life. He declared that it had centered about his affection for me, but that he had feared my high standards of perfection. My heart was too pure to understand the frailty of his, and when he had been guilty of an instant's weakness the fear of losing my esteem prevented him from telling me the truth. A woman who understood his character had managed to hold him by the constantly repeated threat of informing me of their liaison; but when he came and offered to devote his life to me did he act as though he were abandoning anything that mattered? Was it not clear that I was the dominant factor of his entire existence?

I cared for him too dearly. I needed too much the solace of his affection not to believe him. Once more I, who had a short time before sworn never to believe in it again, allowed myself to be ensnared in the web of human affection.

As can readily be imagined, all these sentimental complications left me little desire to worry about politics. It became necessary to do so, however, and this awoke me from my lethargy. Every day my situation grew more critical. The Austrians were withdrawing their troops from Savoy, and I was about to find myself at the mercy of the French or Piedmontese government.

My son and some other children of the same age had amused themselves by playing at soldiers in the courtyard with toy drums and sticks for muskets. This was enough to start reports that his mother was drilling regiments. Fouché, experienced and well informed as he was, knew how much to believe in such cases, but the inexperience of his successors Monsieur de Richelieu and Monsieur Decazes caused these accounts to be accepted blindly. The persecutions against me began again more violently

than ever, as is usually the case when a credulous zeal animates those who are not accustomed to power. They are prepared to believe the most ridiculous things. It is these legends that encourage them to consider the harm they do as just measures of retaliation. I have never been able to understand why Monsieur le Comte de Woyna, who, so I was told daily, was to bring me back my passports, wrote Monsieur Appel to return to Paris immediately and not have anything whatever to do with me any more. I thus remained alone in the midst of all those perils from which until then I had been protected and which could only increase as time went on, without anyone to help me or advise me. Twice I sent Monsieur de Marmol to secure permission to go through Switzerland, but he was not allowed to go farther than Geneva. My horses, which I had left at my country place at Prégny, were not allowed to stay there. I saw plainly that there could be no hope of my remaining in Switzerland, but I spent my days reading descriptions of its natural beauties, as though I were to remain myself amongst them. All I asked as compensation for what I had lost was to have some beautiful landscape before my eyes, but political reasons interfered with the fulfilment of my desires. Those same reasons seemed to forbid my living anywhere.

Indeed, where was I to go that my presence would not alarm someone? Could I stay in the territory of one of the great powers? I was suspicious of them. In Holland? I had reigned there. In Italy? My brother had been Viceroy there. In Bavaria? I should have feared that my presence added to his difficulties. If some spot attracted me particularly, I was quickly forced to give up the idea of going there. My uncertainty increased the dissatisfaction of my companions. They could not realize that I was no longer mistress of my own movements. In spite of all the obstacles that stood in the way they urged me to stay on at Prégny, whose advantages—its proximity to France and to my friends, the same customs, the same

language as in France—they kept pointing out to me. Alas, I should have desired nothing better; but how was it possible for me to remain? I wore myself out explaining to them the strangeness of the position in which I found myself. I wished to make them understand it. Happiness requires no explanation, misfortune does. I said to them over and over again: "The only place we can be happy in is France, but we shall not be left in peace so long as we remain there."

I was right. The foreign rulers separated without taking the trouble to decide what was to become of me. I received letters about my visit at Aix which alarmed me. Dangers of all kinds seemed to accumulate around me. My friends advised me not to remain a day longer at Aix. The excesses which were being committed throughout southern France might easily extend to where I was. At this very time my sole defenders the Austrians withdrew and turned Aix over to the Piedmontese. General Roxhmans, whose behavior had shown that he kept a necessary and benevolent watch over me, no longer commanded this territory. But what was I to do since Geneva would not let me set foot on its soil? The idea finally occurred to me to write directly to the Swiss Diet to ask permission to cross their country and to proceed to Constance. The Grand Duke of Baden was a relative of mine; he had always behaved in a friendly manner toward me. Surely he would not refuse me an asylum.

I confess I was astonished at the completeness with which the Emperor of Russia had severed all relations with me. I was prepared to admit that it was his policy to refuse me any active support, but surely that was no reason for his not displaying the slightest interest in my lot, surrounded as I was by so many dangers. He certainly must have been aware of my position. He finally seemed to be a little less harsh. He bought a portion of the picture gallery at Malmaison which the Allies wished to seize. Doubtless it was more to do my brother a favor

than out of regard for me. Monsieur de Vaux it is true wrote me that the Russian envoy Comte Capo d'Istria was the only one who had listened to his requests and it was from this minister that I received passports authorizing me to proceed to Constance, at the same time as I received the answer from the Diet granting me permission to cross Switzerland. Thus once more it was the Emperor of Russia to whom I was indebted for these slight favors, but so many things had disappointed me in his attitude I felt I could no longer consider him as a friend.

After four months of anxiety, uncertainty and danger I left Aix, November 28, 1815. I left a spot where my heart had been cruelly wounded, a spot associated in my mind with the loss of a friend and the collapse of illusions. To avoid spending the night at an inn I stopped at my country place at Prégny, which was on the borderline between France and Switzerland. About four o'clock in the morning my servants were arrested, and my house surrounded by a band of fifty armed men. It was said I was escorting imperial generals in disguise out of the country. The gendarmes made a thorough search all over the house except in my room, which they did not dare enter in spite of the strictness of their orders. I obliged them to do so, saying: "Come in, gentlemen. Do not be afraid of hurting my feelings. I am leaving France forever and am glad once more to see French uniforms." They were evidently ill at ease and withdrew at once. The *sous-préfet* sent me an order from Monsieur Decazes written in such rude terms that I smiled contemptuously. He expressly forbade me to set foot on French soil. The local authorities were held responsible for seeing that I obeyed this order. What heroic qualities was I supposed to possess that rendered my presence so terrifying? I left while the cannon at Geneva were saluting the arrival there of the Prince of Metternich. I passed through the canton of Vaux without any inci-

dent occurring. At Payerne, just as I was about to have supper, a Frenchman sent word he wished to speak to me. It was General Ameil.

"What imprudence this is on your part!" I exclaimed. "May it not lead you directly into danger?"

"Madame, I owe you my life. I heard you were staying here. How could I resist the opportunity to express my gratitude?"

He then described how, with the passport I had given him, he had successfully evaded the search that had been made for him. One night, having stopped at an inn in the canton of Valais, the innkeeper had asked him to share his room with another traveler whose carriage had broken down. He consented. Who should the other traveler be but Monsieur de Blacas, who was going to Naples to act as French Ambassador there? It was to Monsieur de Blacas' house that General Ameil had been taken on March 19, accused of wishing to desert to the Emperor. He would have been shot had it not been for what took place on the 20th. Consequently he had lost no time in dressing and hurrying off into the mountains. Later he had taken refuge in a little isolated château inhabited by former royalist emigrants from France, who knew what it was to be in distress and who had kept his secret and given him a post as tutor for their children. The alacrity with which he hastened to greet me proved fatal to him. He attracted the attention of several of the men who shadowed my movements, and was shortly afterwards obliged to leave his hiding-place for fear of being handed over to the French authorities. He wrote to me at that time. My brother and I sent him money to rejoin his wife and sail for the United States. He was captured at Hanover and thrown into prison, where, so I am told, he lost his mind.

I have noticed that in general during political upheavals men have less moral resistance than women. They are more easily confused and dismayed. The

reason is simple enough; a man obeys the promptings of ambition. It is natural that he should lose hope if he sees the object of his desires escape him. No blow could be more cruel. A woman on the contrary is all affection, can only be wounded through her affections and is therefore more courageous regarding everything that does not affect her in that respect.

From Payerne I went on to Berne where I also spent the night. I left my carriage at the entrance of the little town of Morat. In spite of the cold I enjoyed making a little sketch of this snow-covered landscape. Suddenly I saw armed men who had been watching me for some time advance toward me. They informed me they had instructions to put me under arrest. I was not moved by this. Nothing could astonish me any longer. I simply remarked that in the past the Swiss had performed a more notable exploit at Morat.[4] The only inconvenience the arrest caused me was to oblige me to wait in a wretched tavern in the bitter cold till Monsieur de Marmol could obtain an explanation of this order. He was forced to return twice to Fribourg, and the council composed of the high dignitaries of the canton took two days to make up their minds what to do. They gave as excuse that it was necessary for them to teach the national committee a lesson, because the committee had never announced officially that I was coming (never announced it, that is to the canton of Fribourg, which had nothing to do with the matter as I was not stopping within its confines). The real reason was that local authorities were anxious to display their authority and show how they could revenge themselves upon a queen who had lost her throne, for their long submission to the power of her family.

Much has been said about the ambitions of great men. Is it not after all more bearable than the petty vexations inflicted by little people animated by trifling motives?

As I had been obliged to spend two days in a miserable

inn at Morat the persons who were with me expected every moment to see Monsieur and Madame Pourtalès, whose château was near by, come to see me. It would have been natural for Madame de Portalès, whose marriage had been arranged by my mother and who was indebted to her for her education and dowry, to treat me with some consideration. Neither she nor her husband appeared. After having received so many favors from us, this conduct on their part might seem astonishing, but I still cared enough about the man who I had hoped would marry my friend Madame de Broc and the woman whom the Empress had treated as her own daughter to try to find some excuses for them. I almost regretted my presence, which caused their conduct to be severely criticized in Paris. I even heard that in order to defend themselves they told all sorts of absurd stories about me, without stopping to remember that the most painful accusations that can be made against us are those of people we considered our friends.

I was saddened to see more and more clearly the melancholy fact that adversity is the only real test of friendship as it is of love. I arrived at Berne, where Monsieur de Krudener, the Russian Ambassador, treated me with the greatest respect. He had for a long time been attached to the Russian Embassy in Paris and recalled the manner in which we had received him. It was doubtless thanks to him that I succeeded in leaving this city, so great was the hatred against the name I bore. The landamman himself, Monsieur de Watteville, forgetting the kindness of my mother to his son and his wife when they were in Paris, was rude enough to send one of his cousins who was a police official to call on me. This official inquired who the man was who had dined with me at the inn of Payerne. I told him that I did not know the person's name and was not prepared to answer any more questions about him. My servants were taken into custody and obliged to describe the appearance of poor

General Ameil, whom fortunately they had seen only on this one occasion. Intentionally they gave an entirely false description. I left this canton under the escort of a colonel of the local police force and followed by all the spies of the region. It was both amusing and ridiculous to see all the precautions and the fears that the approach of a feeble woman and a child of seven could provoke. The behavior of the authorities struck me as so silly that at times it made me smile, at other times it filled me with a sort of pride. I must count for something after all, I said to myself. I have held high rank; I have encountered many people who have met with reverses. As I sympathized with them and did what I could to relieve their distress, I felt that everyone would do the same. I see I was wrong. Thus my behavior must have been meritorious. This idea satisfied me sufficiently to allow me to endure with the same calm all the vexations which were inflicted on me. Monsieur de Krudener again made me realize how indifferent I had become to the Emperor of Russia, who on his journey through Switzerland, although he knew where I was, did not even trouble to ask his ambassador about me. Yet I could not believe that he had previously been insincere in his attitude toward me. People must have been mistaken in saying that he simply acted from motives of policy in being friendly with me in 1814 and hostile toward me in 1815. I prefer to believe that the explanation of his change in attitude is to be found in his naturally suspicious character and in the intrigues planned to increase those suspicions as far as I was concerned.

This is an example of the lengths to which these maneuvers went. At the time of the Emperor's return from Elba a letter I wrote my brother was intercepted. In it I begged him to speak to the Emperor of Russia in the hope of preserving peace, the one thing I really desired. My handwriting was imitated, and certain remarks were added regarding the best manner in which to ap-

proach the Emperor of Russia, whose weak vanity I boasted of being familiar with. This letter wrapped around a perfume bottle was taken to the Emperor. If this story is true—as I presume it is on account of a remark made me by Monsieur Boutiaguine the last time I saw him in Paris, which I did not understand at the time—am I not right in being less severe in my criticism of the Emperor's conduct?

After a journey, whose fatigues had been increased by the intense cold and the incessant vexations I was exposed to, I arrived [5] at Constance, which is a frontier town belonging to the Grand Duchy of Baden. The sight of its gloomy houses, the deserted aspect of its streets, the quiet which seemed to envelop it made me consider it a place remote from the world. Such silence after so much agitation, such isolation after having been the center of so many passions pleased me, and I promised myself that there I should find that rest which seemed constantly to flee before me. But a chamberlain of the court of Baden was sent to inform me that the treaties forbade any member of the imperial family to live elsewhere than within the limits of one of the four great powers. Such severity toward a woman to whom he was related, who had proved her friendship for the Grand Duke in the past, at first shocked me. Since then, having found out that he had been obliged to resist the wishes of his entire family, who were anxious to have his marriage annulled, I felt it quite understandable that he should not have desired to provoke new quarrels about someone who was not a close relative. But once more where was I to go? Everyone was surprised at the courage I displayed in supporting the vicissitudes of fate. I deserved no praise for doing so. Helpless where my heart was concerned I had received wounds there that would never heal, but the caprices of fortune were beneath my consideration. We become stronger as we become able to watch worldly position and rank vanish without emotion. We feel

proud to discover within ourselves the force that makes us consider such things with contempt. Even the hate with which our enemies seek to overwhelm us helps us by its very intensity to support their injustice.

CHAPTER XIX

POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES (DECEMBER 7, 1815–APRIL, 1817)

The Emperor's Government—Slanders About Him—The Family of the Emperor—The Bourbons—Spies—The French Exiles—A Visit from Eugène—Monsieur de Metternich—Monsieur de Flahaut in England—The Little Prince—Louis Demands His Marriage Be Dissolved—Monsieur de Flahaut Again—Pilgrimage to Einsiedeln—A Confession and a Forgiveness—The Break with Flahaut—The Purchase of Arenenberg—Hospitable Bavaria—Purchase of a House at Augsburg.

PASSPORTS from the minister of Russia, which stated in the name of the Allies that I was to be allowed to remain in Constance, reassured my hosts, and I was permitted to stay there, at least provisionally. Thus I was not obliged again to expose my health, which had been failing rapidly, to all the dangers of a harsh winter. I settled down in a little house on the shores of the lake.

But there too I was pursued and persecuted in so many ways that I did not know which of the different governments was the most hostile toward me. Naturally the French envoys did their best to annoy me. They would have been unlikely to allow such an opportunity to escape for proving their devotion to their new master. This was especially true of those who, like Monsieur Auguste de Talleyrand, had in the past served the Emperor. I would, however, have expected some personal animosity on the part of Louis XVIII. Instead he one day said to the Duc d'Otrante: "People say all sorts of things against her. I do not believe them. Let her go somewhere in Switzerland for a time. Everything will be forgotten and she can come back." I was not inclined to take advantage of this favor, however. I remembered

too keenly everything I had had to suffer in Paris and I enjoyed, in a sense, being in exile. At least now there could be nothing equivocal about my position. Thus it was not toward the monarch himself that I felt resentful, but toward those ambitious men who in order to make themselves seem indispensable exaggerated the alleged dangers of the situation in which the Bourbons found themselves.

The Emperor Napoleon's government never troubled about such minor matters. Once an enemy had been defeated he was no longer to be feared, and the report of a subordinate could not injure him. The Emperor's genius at once distinguished truth from falsehood. Even had caution made him suspicious the sense of his power would have reassured him immediately. Then too the contempt he had for men in general contributed to make him indulgent toward them. He was rarely mistaken in his general theories regarding human nature, but he offended people by applying these theories to their particular cases. The result was that although those who sought only to further their personal interests were always satisfied, those who felt the need of appreciation in order to be contented were never altogether happy.

The amount of work he had to do allowed the Emperor only time enough to pay attention to a person's abilities, not to his character. If he made mistakes it was by trusting those whose interests he had served rather than whose pride he had flattered. He should have remembered that passions are stronger than deliberate calculation. Thus when he allied himself completely to Austria through his marriage he believed in the strength of this union because he felt it was useful to both nations. He did not realize that whereas he could forget his successes it was harder for his associates not to remember their defeats.

His mind was too lofty to understand hatred. He aroused it in others, but did not feel it himself. Even

when he was informed that people hated him he did not seek to punish them. He was therefore prepared to forgive everything except what affected his power or interfered with his plans. One day I heard him make the following remark: "I have one goal. It is a lofty one, and I wish to attain it. So much the worse for those who get in my way." He illustrated his meaning by comparing his career to a mountain the ascent of which was difficult, but which he scaled, pushing roughly aside everything that stood in his path. Once he had reached the summit, however, he was prepared to help those whom he had wounded in his ascent.

In the retired spot in which I now found myself I read all the slanders which were being printed about the Emperor. Till then I admit I had never been able to realize how utterly passion can repudiate what it so recently worshiped. As a Frenchwoman it was particularly painful for me to note how my compatriots were lacking in self-respect, since even the captivity of a great man did not disarm their hatred against him. They preferred to sully the memory of his success rather than pity his misfortune. Ingratitude actually became contempt. This crowd of nobility and kings he had created refused to bestow a title on the man without whom they would never have had one themselves. But what harm can such insignificant beings do to a genius?

As for us, the members of his family, people displayed their disdain in every possible way. In order to please them we should have abased ourselves. As the Queen of Westphalia, whose behavior was so dignified, expressed it, "They are jealous even of the air we breathe." I must do justice to the members of the Emperor's family. Under all circumstances they displayed nobility of sentiment, force of character and a proper pride. Without money, without anyone to take their side, although exposed to all sorts of vexations, they won people's respect wherever they happened to be. It is true that misfortune

makes a man more perfect. If he is inclined to be vain and self-important when Fortune smiles on him, it is because Prosperity is a bad advisor.

It was just after my arrival at Constance that I heard of the execution of Marshal Ney.[1] This showed me that even military glory is not sufficient to avoid people's hatred. In vain his wife had done everything she could to save him. He was bound to die, and all his glorious deeds were not enough to cause his sentence to be suspended. But how was it that even Monsieur Lavallette, so calm, so highly respected by all, and whom only a few could condemn for his unalterable devotion to the Emperor, fell a victim to the spirit of revenge on the part of the politicians? When I read how he had escaped, thanks only to his wife's devotion, I trembled for fear he might be recaptured. In that case it would be useless to count on any sign of the mercy which I had always believed existed. I had been wrong to judge things as they were now, in accordance with what they had been in the past. The fact of being constantly in touch with an exceptional man and of noticing how his lofty ideals were reflected in his smallest actions had caused me to believe that I should find these same sentiments elsewhere. I forgot that ordinary men all behave alike and are all swayed by commonplace prejudices.

To avoid being mistaken in one's opinions of people one should take care to descend to the level of those whom one is judging. That was why I could not understand what was going on in France. I could not understand the acts of violence that were taking place there. To be sure I recalled some of those which had occurred in my childhood and from which my family had suffered, but those had generally been committed by unprincipled, uneducated men. Today, under the rule of a respectable family which deserved public sympathy on account of the misfortunes it had suffered, Frenchmen were allowed to assassinate other Frenchmen with impunity. Was it pos-

sible to believe that the Bourbons thought themselves foreigners ruling over a foreign land? By doing so they repudiated the glorious victories our armies had achieved and the benefits of our form of government, even while they were benefiting by them. Instead of trying to prove that the army was insubordinate and the nation corrupt, they should have recognized the value of both, and placed themselves at the head of all worthy undertakings. The monarch's recognition of heroic deeds accomplished in the past would have won the support of those whom so many marks of contempt now kept at a distance.

Since then I have grown calmer. I have come to understand that these are the usual effects of a counter-revolution, unless some firm hand directs it, and that the ruler's motto might be the phrase, "Protect me from my friends, I can take care of my enemies."

Personally I found myself surrounded by spies of all kinds. Frequently, in order to win my confidence, they would employ the artifice of pretended misfortune. I would listen to them, even knowing that what I was told might not be true. I went so far as to try to soothe those who, when asking for favors, at the same time protested bitterly against existing conditions. Nevertheless I remained a highly suspicious character in the eyes of all the governments. Since no actual proof against me existed, my enemies spread all sorts of ridiculous and absurd stories about me. Sometimes it was said I had been seen in disguise in Paris or in some other part of France; sometimes I was reported to have received officers who had been dismissed from the army or envoys from groups of the Emperor's adherents. The more these tales lacked foundation, the more dangerous and skilful I was thought to be. Sometimes I was reminded of that melancholy period when my husband evoked phantoms which troubled both his peace of mind and my own. I found that governments were inclined to do exactly the same thing. They laid the same snares for me that my

husband had, and, as in his case, I made no resistance but simply continued the even tenor of my ways, trusting in the purity of my intentions and my irreproachable conduct. Now I had as an added comfort an idea I had not had before; namely, that it was doubtless part of my destiny to be unjustly suspected, and that I must submit to it as one does to something that is unavoidable.

Among the French exiles I saw arrive at Constance there were some former members of the revolutionary assembly, now almost all grown old and feeble. Pitilessly banished from Switzerland, they came to spend their last days by my side. One poor woman who was suffering from acute lung trouble could not obtain permission to stop at Berne and died an hour after she had completed her journey. On seeing so much misery, weak-minded people might readily have believed that Madame de Krudener had been really inspired when she had declared: "Those who follow the Emperor Napoleon's cause will be persecuted and tracked down. They will not have a place to lay their heads."

I might therefore explain the character of Madame de Krudener as I deciphered it, and at the same time relate what I afterwards learned about her. After I had listened to her for a little while, it was evident to me that it was her kindness of heart which had attracted her to religion, while it was her too vivid imagination which had troubled her mind. All her inspirations seemed to her to come from God. As she had only pure and beneficent ones, her doctrine was harmless as far as she was concerned; but were not other people in danger of taking promptings of their human desires as the instructions of Providence? The ladies in attendance on the Empress of Russia saw Madame de Krudener frequently at Baden in 1814, and doubtless she predicted the same things to them that she did to me. The Emperor of Russia heard about this, and when he passed through the Grand Duchy of Baden with his troops he was very anxious to see her.

A little superstition is always mixed with our fears and our hopes. In times of stress men feel the need of looking into the future and turn to supernatural forces for assistance. Alexander, pious by nature, was very ready to be led astray in such matters. Not knowing where to find Madame de Krudener, he was on his knees in prayer, beseeching God to bring her to him, when there was a knock at the door and a letter was brought him from the very person whose advice he considered so supremely important. Such a coincidence was certainly singular. Madame de Krudener was writing him on behalf of some people who were in distress. The Emperor sent for her, and she remained with him until he reached Paris. During his stay there he went to see her alone every evening. They prayed together, and her influence over him was apparent in his refusal to help in any way those who he considered had incurred the wrath of the Almighty. Thus out of love of God he relinquished that of his neighbor, although one must be blind indeed not to see that the two are really the same. She meanwhile went about in the prisons consoling those who were to die, although she was only interested in what became of them after death. She wept with them and encouraged them to pray, but considered it impossible to attempt to save the lives of those whom God had condemned. Among the prisoners she saw was La Bédoyère.

Yet the character of Emperor Napoleon did not quite agree with the rôle her imagination had assigned to him. For a long time she was convinced that he was the Antichrist whose coming the prophets had predicted and who would come to reign over the nations of the world, which would bow down before him. As long as Napoleon showed no signs of posing as a divinity she felt he had not completed his career, and she kept saying, "He will come back." Meanwhile she labored incessantly to find means to rescue humanity from the being whom she considered capable of causing mankind's damnation. It was

she and no one else that conceived the idea of the Holy Alliance and caused it to be formed. Madame de Krudener was wholly absorbed in her mystic visions, and yet politics intervened and used her to accomplish its purposes. Thus important events may be the outcome of the weakness of a private individual.

As may readily be imagined I did not obtain all these details from Madame de Krudener herself. One day I said to her laughingly: "The Emperor of Russia is the man who more closely resembles the Antichrist. He possesses the charm, winning manner and power of seduction one associates with that personage, whereas the Emperor Napoleon even when a prisoner, although he fascinates the imagination, arouses a feeling of respect and awe which precludes any more tender emotions."

Madame de Krudener did not permit anyone to joke on this subject, and always ended by saying: "If the Emperor Napoleon was really the man who was destined to bring about catastrophe, it was not his fault, and we should pray for him."

I have never known a woman who inspired a more lively affection because of her kindness of heart, more alarm on account of her madness and more madness because of her persuasive qualities. Her insanity became more and more acute, and on her succumbing to a sort of mania for prophecy she was in her turn persecuted and driven from place to place, till at last she found refuge in Russia.

Sometime after my arrival at Constance I had the joy of being able once more to embrace my brother. He had left his family at Munich and came to pay me a visit. How many things I had to tell him and how a moment's pleasure can make one forget days of suffering! Once more I felt that I was not alone on earth and that there was someone who still loved me sincerely. Eugène listened without astonishment to my account of all the tribulations I had experienced, and informed me of the

hatred with which the word Frenchman was pronounced all over Europe. He too had been a victim of this hatred, although he had taken no part in recent events. He did not conceal the fact that several libelous pamphlets about me were being circulated in Germany. They had profoundly exasperated him, and though he did not for an instant doubt his sister he regretted the fact that such charges were brought against her. He, at least, had come unsoiled through all the struggle and won the reward his conduct had deserved. Brave, loyal, frank, generous, incapable of betraying his word, preferring honor to position, a dignified retreat to power earned by base means, and the performance of his duty to any pleasures, his character was gay, indulgent, well-poised and gentle. Easy-going as regards the little things in life, he held decided opinions on serious questions of conduct. His mind was solid rather than brilliant, his feelings deep rather than expansive. He possessed a judgment that was both clear and far-sighted. Having been accustomed to serve a man who was jealous of his own power, my brother had acquired the habit of more or less effacing himself, keeping in the background where he escaped notice. But in society the only talents that are appreciated are those which glitter. In short I had just bidden farewell to a great man and now found myself in the company of a good one.

Eugène told me that Monsieur Lavallette was in hiding near the place where he lived and that this was with the permission of the King of Bavaria. It was agreed that in the spring I should go and visit him, meeting at the same time his little children whom I had never seen. When he left I found myself once more alone, with no one to comfort me and surrounded by more dangers than ever. At that time a brother's visit to his sister did not seem natural and aroused all sorts of conjectures. Never did men display greater cowardice and behave more despicably than during this period.

One day I received a letter from Monsieur de Metternich containing an Austrian passport. He invited me, on behalf of the Emperor of Austria, to come and live in that country where I should be treated with all the respect due my rank. Doubtless the Emperor was the sovereign to whom it was most logical that I should look for assistance. My children were cousins of his grandson; but did he still remember this fact? Had he not given me sufficient reason to distrust him? I decided to decline for the time being, and added that both at Constance and in his own territory I hoped always to be able to count on him for protection. I admit that I preferred freedom, even though it involved danger, to the protection offered by a prison. Then too I found much that was attractive in my solitary retreat. The scenery was magnificent. Not far away from the town itself was a little wood called Lorette where I walked every morning. The lofty snow-covered mountains reflecting in the lake gave a grand and imposing beauty to the scene, while close at hand the leaves were beginning to bud, the early violets made their appearance, and nature every day became more lovely.

My chief concern was to watch the progress of spring, just as my only joy was to gather the flowers it brings with it. The more one has suffered from human beings the more one enjoys nature. Only nature calms and rests the mind and can efface the most painful impressions. Of all the attributes of luxury and wealth that I had formerly possessed, what I missed most was the bouquet of roses and Parma violets which was brought me every morning from Saint-Leu. I dreamed of owning this little wood of Lorette, of building a little house there and of gathering about me a few faithful friends. I had made all my plans, and like the milkmaid in La Fontaine's fable, I already saw before me a simple but attractive cottage. I smelled in anticipation the perfume of the violets and roses which I should certainly have

THE SALON OF THE QUEEN AT AUGSBURG
Water-Color by A. Garnerey in the Collection of Prince Napoleon

planted there, and I let myself be carried away by these projects as one does by plans which both the mind and heart can approve of without reserve. Soon, however, I learned that orders had been given that I was not to be allowed to acquire any property in the Grand Duchy of Baden. Thus my troubles were to include the smallest as well as the greatest joys life has to offer.

Although up to that time not one of my actions would have justified the allied sovereigns in thinking that I had anything to do with politics, an incident now occurred which, had they heard of it, might have given them a certain excuse for their alarms. And yet only fanatics would consider it a crime to save the life of a man condemned to death for a political offense. My banker forwarded me a letter from a colonel confined in the prison of Lyons. It informed me that General Mouton-Duvernet, who had been condemned to death, could be saved if a sum of a hundred thousand francs which the jailer demanded as a bribe could be collected. Only twenty thousand francs were needed to complete this amount. Time was precious. The General was about to be transferred to another prison, and then all hope would be lost. The prisoner's friends felt they might turn to us in this extremity and they therefore besought my brother and myself to contribute to the release of this brave officer as rapidly as possible. I sent a letter about the matter to my brother, but it would have taken time for an answer to reach me. The slightest delay might have proved fatal to the General. I had no money. Consequently I decided to send a diamond valued at twenty thousand francs. I concealed the fact from all those about me as though I were doing wrong. The smallest gift to charity aroused their alarm, for it was said everywhere that I spent money to provoke popular uprisings. What would people have thought had they heard about this diamond? Nevertheless nothing stopped me. A man's life was at stake. I received two replies, one from

my brother who consented to help the prisoner, the other from the colonel, who acknowledged receipt of the diamond and at the same time related the tragic scenes that were taking place in the south of France and the incidents at Grenoble, and expressed the hope of some change in the political situation. Nevertheless General Mouton-Duvernet was tried, condemned and shot. I wrote the banker to inform his client that in future I would receive no more letters from a country where my help could not avert misfortune. The banker came to see me. My letter had made him realize what was going on. We had both been duped by a scheming rascal to whom he had loaned money. By reading to him this sort of political report which was being forwarded to me the banker had been made to believe that, thanks to my influence, a revolution was about to break out, and he had advanced funds without taking any further precautions. In order to prevent a scandal, which would have compromised me, I was obliged to repay part of his losses.

Sacrifices of this kind meant little to me. I have never known the value of money. I could not bear the idea of owing anyone a penny. Everything that was mine was to be had for the asking. I have never once refused a request for money. How could I humiliate a person who was so much in distress as to be obliged to ask for help? In 1814, almost overnight my fortune was reduced by the treaties from an income of two million francs to four hundred thousand. I was at first surprised. How was I to manage, since in my budget this amount of four hundred thousand francs was completely covered by one item, my charities? But caring for luxury as little as I did it was easy enough to adjust my expenses, and my arrangements were made rapidly. Now I found myself in a very different position. No more income, no more resources of any kind except my diamonds and my picture gallery, which I should have sold off immediately in order to constitute a capital. But I felt no need of money.

I imagined one could live without it. Consequently the results of the first few sales of my pictures were devoted to assuring the future of those who accompanied me into exile. If I enjoyed the thought that they remained with me through a spirit of devotion, I was also pleased to make them so independent that I need have no doubt of that devotion. I was so impatient to see them happy that I sent for their children, their entire families to join us. I doubtless acted too quickly, more so than if I had stopped to think, but then as always I obeyed the promptings of my desire to make others happy, a desire which was constantly being frustrated. No matter how submissive may be the attitude of those who share the misfortune of others, they never can be as patient as we are on whom those misfortunes fall directly. They feel that their lot is the more painful of the two and imagine that they are the persons really afflicted by loss of wealth and a change from their usual comfort. They are more inconsolable than we are. This is natural enough. The person who is really afflicted by Fate surmounts these petty worries, and the very extent of his losses contributes toward making him calm.

My one occupation in the quiet retreat in which I now found myself was to compose melancholy ballads. I did so easily. Not even the chatter of a drawing-room disturbed me. I wrote "Partant pour la Syrie" at Malmaison, while my mother played backgammon. The song proved popular and was sung during the war of 1809, as "La Sentinelle" was during the Spanish campaign. After that, each time the armies took the field I would be asked to write something, which I did reluctantly, for I did not like to seem to pose as an author, too lofty a title for my modest talents. At Constance I had only a few books and no collection of poetry in which I could find verses to set to music. I had in the past written some verses for my brother and I tried to write some poems, but the difficulty of finding rhymes, the restraint

imposed on me by the verse form tired me and after having scribbled some very poor doggerel I remained faithful to music.

I often received letters from Monsieur de Flahaut. He had been well received in England, and he was most anxious to arrange to come and live near me. The idea of seeing him amid the scenes which surrounded me gave them an added charm. A beautiful place, a beloved person—I have never understood how anyone could desire more. That had always been my sole ambition. France had forever banished my family from her soil. The death sentence had been passed against any of us who dared set foot within her boundaries. This decree had wounded me deeply. Even my son, in spite of his extreme youth, had exclaimed with tears running down his cheeks: "Do they really mean it, mamma? Aren't we ever going to live in France any more?" I could not utter the fatal "No" without a deep emotion. But once the instant had passed I tried to find elements of consolation even in my children's unhappy fate.

I said to myself that it was best for them to be brought up far from the flattery of courtiers, amid humble surroundings. There closer to the sufferings of the poor, they could learn to sympathize with those in distress. This proved the case. For instance my younger son appeared one day without his shoes. He had just given them to a poor little boy who did not have any, and his tutor, who was a few steps away, had not had time to see him do it. Had he been surrounded by a royal bodyguard I should not have had the opportunity of rejoicing over this sign of his generosity. Hence I ought not to regret their present position as long as they were young; but, later, when they had reached the age of serving their country, would it be possible for them to do so? Was this not a vain dream of mine? The future seemed too gloomy; I dared not think of it. It would have annihilated the courage with which I faced my present lot and which enabled me to be almost contented with it.

Once I happened to read in a newspaper that the Duchesse d'Angoulême had gone to see my protégées at Saint Denis. That institution had been founded under my auspices. It had been placed under my special protection. All those young hearts had loved me. I felt that they were being taken from me. The incident caused me one of the most painful pangs of regret I experienced in the face of so many vanished glories.

I left Constance in the month of June to see my brother, who was living just then at a little country place on the lake of Stahrenberg in Bavaria. His handsome, well brought up children, his wife, so happy in their midst, formed a perfect picture of that domestic felicity which I had so ardently desired but never attained. Monsieur Lavallette under an assumed name was in hiding on another little estate about two miles from there. My joy at seeing him once more was equal to my emotion at hearing him describe his adventures which had ended so miraculously. Alas, his wife, to whom he owed his life, broken by so many varied emotions, grief-stricken at the death of a son to whom she had just given birth, imprisoned in a narrow cell, constantly the prey of alarm regarding her husband's safety, had not been able to resist so much suffering. Her mind had failed her. When at last a tardy justice had given her her freedom, restored her to the world's admiring enthusiasm and to the gratitude of a loving husband, her disordered brain prevented her from enjoying the happiness she had so richly deserved.

The Queen of Bavaria came to Stahrenberg to visit my sister-in-law. In spite of the prejudice that so many slanderous stories might have aroused in regard to me, personally, and the general prejudice she was said to have against the French, I had no reason to find fault with her attitude toward me. She was the first to speak of the cordial welcome I had given her in Paris, and I must say that at this time few persons were prepared to remember or refer to the past.

I returned to my retreat from where I went to Gais, a village situated on the top of the Appenzell, in order to follow a treatment of goat's milk which had been prescribed for me. There I met a landamman, formerly a notorious enemy of the Emperor and one of the members of the Diet who had most vigorously opposed my stay in Switzerland. He admitted this to me, as well as the fact that seeing me had dissipated the fears he had felt regarding me. As his canton was the only one which refused to furnish recruits for the French army, Ambassador Auguste de Talleyrand made violent protests to the landamman. Talleyrand attributed this refusal to my influence. He said the flattering way in which the landamman spoke of me proved this. From that moment on I found an ardent partisan in the man to whom this unjust act revealed the violence of feeling that existed against me.

When one recognizes that he is mistaken in one thing, he is easily inclined to believe that his entire judgment was wrong. When a hostile criticism has led us to be mistaken in our opinion of someone, we feel the need of making amends and become the more favorably disposed toward him in proportion to the degree in which we were previously hostile. It is in this way that I am indebted to the general hostility against me for several dear friends. As for my landamman, he realized the error into which he had fallen so thoroughly that, in spite of being well over fifty, he offered me his hand and his fortune. He even undertook to secure a divorce for me, and on my refusing as tactfully as possible he offered me his canton and even his own house as a refuge against my persecutors, adding that only time should ever make me leave it. Since then he has come to understand the unsuitableness of his proposal, but has not ceased to be devoted to me.

I began to think that I was to be left unmolested in my retreat and was happy in the thought that Monsieur

de Flahaut would come shortly and share it with me. While not expecting his immediate arrival I unconsciously turned my steps in the direction from which he would arrive, and if I saw a man in the distance, the sight of him would make my heart beat faster. Yet frequently this desire for his coming was checked by all the arguments my mind presented against it. What would the world say to our reunion? Would it not have the right to criticize me harshly? And I, what happiness can I offer a man who thus takes it on himself to share my misfortune? He enjoys society and is popular. If he follows me now, he must abandon it and be prepared to devote himself to the company of a person who is a social outcast. Only the very deepest affection can replace everything else the world has to offer. Perhaps it is a lofty rather than a tender sentiment which prompts him to return to me. I will not accept this sacrifice. He knows how dear he is to me, but if he can do without me, then I must bear it. In order to do so in advance I conjured up all the difficulties such a union would create and alternately exaggerated and diminished them. In the midst of all these hesitations I received a letter from my husband.

Since leaving France I had had by letter business discussions that proved he still intended to remain my master. This letter on the contrary declared he wished us to separate and have our marriage dissolved. He asked me to give him his freedom and begged me to join him in requesting the Pope for it, and to declare that our marriage had taken place under compulsion. He added that I probably remembered that when he married me he was really in love with my cousin Madame Lavallette. The attention she had recently attracted was probably what had reminded my husband of her. I leave my readers to imagine into what new state of perplexity such a proposal plunged me, coming as it did at this time, when my mind was already full of sentimental thoughts. To

be free, to be able to marry the one man I had ever loved, to be able to have at last what I had always longed for—a happy home. This was almost too great a happiness for me to bear. And it was almost within my grasp. How cruelly I would suffer if I was forced to give it up! But I had my children and my conscience. I could not sacrifice both. To declare that I had married under constraint would be to commit a perjury, at least to myself. Moreover, is not the marriage bond a sacred and indissoluble one? How had I been able to imagine that I was free? I therefore decided to try to convince my husband that such a plan was impossible and urge him to give it up. The more my desires agreed with his, the more I thought of my duty and my children's interests. I felt then how keenly human nature can suffer from those conflicts between the heart and the brain. I learned at the same time that the secret of retaining one's peace of mind is to strive to be completely sincere, to obey only the promptings of one's conscience and leave the rest to Providence. Consequently when the ecclesiastical council of Constance came to question me in the name of the Pope, and made me swear on the Gospel to tell the whole truth, I did not need to hesitate in replying to all their questions. At the end of this meeting, which lasted a long while, Abbé Bertrand suggested to me that a question as important as this required longer reflection on my part and at least the calling of a family council. He quoted the example of several princesses, whose answers on similar occasions had been rehearsed and commented on by a gathering of bishops. I checked his erudition by assuring him that all the family councils in the world would never persuade me to say a word that was untrue, that, having obeyed the dictates of my own conscience, I was prepared to accept whatever decision might be taken in regard to me, and that I had a certain merit in doing this and thus scrutinizing the secrets of my heart.

In accordance with his latest promises, Monsieur de

Flahaut gave me the fullest details of every incident of his daily life. He had attracted the attention of a young woman, rich, independent, and possessing many accomplishments and talents. He was touched by the interest she displayed in him, but his only thought was when he could come to me, and he had asked for his passport. We do not know how much we demand when we require someone to tell us the whole truth about what he is doing and thinking. These confidences from Monsieur de Flahaut intensified the agitation which filled my heart. It seemed that he could be happy away from me and might even make a successful marriage. Thus I became an obstacle to his happiness. What a melancholy thought! Should I not suggest that he pause and examine his sentiments toward me? He does not yet say he loves the other woman. On the contrary he assures me of his entire devotion. But perhaps he is mistaken? This is what he must make sure of.

I wrote him to heed only the promptings of his heart and to pursue only the course which might prove the best for him. He replied that what mattered most in the world to him was to be able to devote his life to me. Yet, while waiting for permission to leave England, he made a trip to Scotland which allowed him to see more of the young woman who had expressed her liking for him. I studied every indication that might help me understand his sentiments. I so bitterly feared that my heart might be leading me astray. On his return to London, Monsieur de Flahaut informed me that new difficulties had arisen and asked me to obtain him a passport from Bavaria. My brother, whom I asked to do this for me, replied that a Frenchman must apply to his own government and have his request countersigned by the ambassador of the country to which he wished to go. This was the customary procedure, and there was little danger of such a request being refused. If, however, after having tried all these measures Monsieur de Flahaut still failed

to secure his papers, my brother was prepared to try to secure a passport for him. I sent this reply to Monsieur de Flahaut, and I again received renewed expressions of regrets, an assurance that the obstacle to the delivery of a passport had not been overcome, but not a word about again renewing his request in Bavaria. On the contrary his letter concluded, "My friends here believe I am making a great mistake in leaving just at this time." This phrase settled my doubts. I felt that since he submitted to, instead of striving to overcome, the obstacles that separated us, he did not have that affection for me which would replace everything else in his life. I understood that our reunion was a sacrifice he was noble enough to make on my behalf, but which I also was noble enough to refuse. Perhaps, too, this might be best for me. My mind was now irrevocably made up, since I felt that I was to be the only one who would suffer. But where could I hope to find the courage necessary to give up the one thing I cared about?

However great our moral strength may be, there comes a time when it must crumble. There is an end to everything, and I felt I had reached that end. Yet I was wrong, since the very sacrifice which I imposed on myself served to stimulate my energy. The passion which filled my heart to overflowing seemed to increase still more in the midst of my efforts to suppress it. Constantly I was made aware of its depth, and I was terrified to find how completely it absorbed me. Who would help me? Who would defend me in this struggle against myself? I felt that I must write and say that I no longer loved him, that I had given up once for all that affection around which my life had centered for so long. How was I to tell him such a lie? How was I to make him believe I was sincere? There was only one way: it was really to renounce what I had loved so long, to implore the help of God and promise Him to cast off forever that affection which had occupied too great a place in my life.

I had been brought up with religious convictions. The discussions I heard in society had shaken my faith. The death of my son had destroyed my trust in Providence. Had I been guilty I should have accepted my misfortunes; being innocent I doubted that God took any direct interest in human affairs. While I still asked Him to spare those who were dear to me, I did so from necessity rather than by conviction. One day in Holland I had the presumption to reply to Abbé Bertrand, who was advising me to follow more closely the teachings of my religion: "What can you expect me to say in a confessional? All I could do would be to speak ill of others and well of myself." I here admit that the greatest of my faults was vanity. Proud of my patience in bearing my domestic misfortunes, spoiled by the praise I had received when I was young, I was convinced that I was a person of special merit. Since then I have discovered my mistake. At the time of which I am now speaking the uneasiness which filled my heart made my weakness so evident that I could not deceive myself as to my true moral value. Therefore I did not wish to remain quiescent. From then on, I determined to seek help only in that religion which, while teaching us to love our fellow men, also indicates so clearly the path we are to follow in order never to go astray. How precious it is to find such a guide! If our passions sometimes cause us to abandon Him, they also may serve to bring us back to Him.

In my walks along the highway I had frequently met pilgrims coming from France and from other far-off countries who were on their way to the famous abbey of Einsiedeln, situated in one of the wildest corners of Switzerland. I never thought that prayers were particularly efficacious if uttered in any special locality, but I admired the faith which causes people to undergo fatigue, privations and difficulties of all sorts in order to obtain that peace of soul which the torments of the world can

no longer disturb. Not daring to hope to obtain any such reward I, nevertheless, thought that in a spot to which so many persons have come seeking a relief from their troubles I might find some balm for mine. At such a place one must be able to find learned, enlightened men, free from those political passions which disturb our times. Perhaps their advice might be beneficial to me. If I chose a spot where the Divine Presence is frequently invoked and honored, to make my vows renouncing that affection which still dominated my heart, I might hope to have a better chance never to break such a solemn pledge.

At the end of October, while the weather was still fine, I drove off in my calash, accompanied only by a single companion. The countryside along the shores of the lake of Zurich through which we passsed was most attractive. As I am always influenced by the sight of a lovely landscape, I felt the calm of some gentle melancholy come over me during this part of our trip; but when the mountains rose more steeply, more threateningly about us, when the roar of torrents made itself heard, when the vegetation became more sparse and arid I was filled with alarm at the thought that I was about to give up the one interest in my life, the only friend I still possessed. I was about to find myself alone, utterly alone. I should not even be able to confide to him the efforts it was costing me to dismiss him forever from my presence. No more should I be able to pour out my feelings into an understanding heart, and it was because I loved him so dearly that I was about to make this sacrifice.

Night came on while I was still plunged in these reflections, and when it was time to leave my carriage I was deeply disturbed in my mind. The silence which surrounded me increased this distress.

A French priest came out to meet me carrying a dark lantern. Before conducting me to the apartment which had been prepared for me in the abbey, he wished to

show me the church and the miraculous statue of the Virgin which attracts the unfortunate from such distant points. If objects sacred to but a small number of persons are always impressive, they become still more so amid surroundings which doubtless long before our time were already the scene of those same conflicts, those same sorrows, those same sacrifices. Everything filled me with a feeling of religious awe and impressed me with a consciousness of the solemnity of the step I was about to take.

The next day I appeared fearlessly before a judge I had myself chosen and sought out. Without difficulty I described my life and my misfortunes, and whole-heartedly forgave all those who had ever done me harm. But when I was told that the sentiment which had too profoundly stirred my heart was a guilty one, since it had separated me from the only love permitted us, the love of our Creator, and that I must banish it completely from my soul I forgot I had come to implore strength to do this very thing. Sobs choked me, and I fainted. The kindly priest, deeply moved, turned away and waited for me to have regained courage to myself perform the sacrifice he had demanded. He was right. After having wept copiously I felt my voice revive, and I promised God never to love passionately anyone but Him and to make Him my sole Comforter. The venerable priest had at all times been gentle rather than severe. Now as I was about to leave he said, "Ah, madame, how you have been maligned! In spite of the solitude of this retired spot English newspapers have reached us. In them there were statements about you which I now realize must have been utterly false. Allow me, whenever the opportunity presents itself, to deny such slanders about you. Visitors frequently come here. I shall therefore have the joy of being able to make amends for an injustice which I too committed from ignorance. I should never have thought that newspapers would dare print such lies."

"My Father," I answered, "while I leave you full lib-

erty to say what you want to about me, I know people will not believe you. When political passions run as high as they do nowadays, the truth is of only minor importance."

On my return home I wrote Monsieur de Flahaut. I described how deeply my feelings toward him had made me suffer. My health, my reputation, my happiness, all made it necessary to give him up. I declared that my decision was irrevocable and I begged him, out of friendship, no longer to think of coming to live with me. How weak is the human heart! Even while I was writing this I still hoped he would not believe me, that he would perhaps appear and force me to take back all I had said. But such was not the case. In spite of the pain my letter may have caused him he respected the wishes of the woman who had never deceived him.[2]

It would take too long to describe in detail all the tumult that filled my soul. After such violent conflicts it is natural that much time must elapse before the heart can regain its accustomed tranquillity. Even though the most painful moment be past there are many mornings on which we wake and feel the impress of grief even before we realize that we are alive. Little by little, the thought of having done our duty comes to relieve the heart of the weight which is oppressing it. We grow conscious of our own powers of resistance, and, as we do so, our courage revives, and calm returns to us. Only our health remains affected by so many shocks. I suffered from nervous headaches, which kept me in bed for more than a month at a time, headaches which no doctor could cure. As my illness sprang from moral causes, no one was able to supply the one remedy which I needed, namely, complete peace of mind. My ordeal was still too recent. At the same time my hesitations were at an end. This in itself was a great step forward. A gentle melancholy stole over me. My heart, seeking some outlet, overflowed with tenderness for all those who surrounded me.

I dreaded the idea of concentrating my affections on a single being, for all those who have known what love really is must fear the thought of loving again.

Thus I attained that peaceful state of mind in which our affection remains quiescent. At times I was conscious of the hatred of certain people. I pitied them for being so unjust and did not resent their attitude. Indeed I almost sympathized with them, thinking how sorry they would feel when some day they learned that all my life I had been unhappy. Reading those pamphlets in which every conceivable slander was printed about me and which would formerly have aroused my indignation, I now said to myself: "Perhaps in those days I was too vain, I may have considered myself better than those about me. Therefore I have deserved to be humiliated." Thinking this, I was able to resign myself to what had occurred.

It was then that I discovered through my own experience the difference between the precepts of philosophy and the inspired teachings of religion. Philosophy teaches us to be charitable as a means of satisfying our personal pride by the thought that we have done good to others. Religion adds to this spirit of self-satisfaction the secret joy of having served the will of the Almighty. Thus the philosopher thinks only of himself, the Christian only of his God. The former is constantly alone; the latter always has a protector on whom he may call.

It is easy to judge which of the two will persevere the longer in the paths of virtue. The person who feels responsible only toward himself will, the day his passions become too acute, give way to them, and be unable afterwards to regain what he has lost. He possesses no staff to which he may cling, no firm ground on which he may stand. Such is the fate of the philosopher. But since He to whom we are bound by our promises is at the same time the source of all hope, all justice and all loving-kindness, when we fall we have only to call on Him for

help, and His all-powerful arm will come to our rescue. This is the joy of being a Christian. These thoughts inspired me every day with a stronger confidence in that religion which I had so long neglected, and which so urgently beseeches us to love and forgive our neighbors that our innate need for loving finds its expression in its teachings. Hence I could not understand how this religion could be used in France as an excuse for that injustice and hatred of others which its teachings condemn.

I heard from Paris that people were still talking about me. Rumor declared I was hidden in the capital. The *grand prévot* of the department of the Seine, when one of his friends asked him about it, replied, "It is not true, but it is as well to let people think so." Monsieur Decazes was just then the King's favorite, a post which arouses the jealousy of other courtiers. People recalled the fact of his having been at one time my husband's secretary. Without stopping to inquire whether I had been in Holland at the time or not, his enemies in order to discredit him spread the report that he had remained attached to my cause and was betraying the King. It was even said I was hiding in his house. The King, who knew the truth, joked him about this, and, so I was told afterwards, these witticisms did not seem to displease Monsieur Decazes. One day Monsieur de Vaux went to see Monsieur Decazes on a business matter and complained regarding the scandalous pamphlets that were being published about me, pamphlets whose falsity the minister must be well aware of. "What can I do about it?" replied Monsieur Decazes. "I did not have them printed and I cannot forbid their being sold. They fit in with our plans. They help discredit those people and keep them out of France." Thus I constantly served as a pawn in the game of politics. Although I once more belonged to the class of those whose lives are anonymous, or at least not made the subject of public criticism, the

class where people are loved for their personal merits, I still found myself pursued, and tormented until I actually regretted the days when I had been so unhappy. For then at least I had been able to do good to others. Now my presence did them harm. If people wrote me or inquired sympathetically about me, they were annoyed, robbed of their possessions and imprisoned. Nothing but hate now surrounded me, whereas formerly I at least received marks of apparent affection from those with whom I came in contact. This middle-class life, which I had thought possessed so many charms, only offered me renewed causes for distress.

Thus we are constantly being deceived by our imagination even when it limits our desires and makes us ask for less than we actually have. Common sense advises us to remain as we are, to resign ourselves to our fate and to make the most of what lofty and worthy gifts it offers us. Happiness lies in ourselves rather than in our relations with others. We can lose everything except such satisfaction as we can find in ourselves. Therefore I realized I must commence to enjoy what I still possessed. I said to myself: "If I no longer am very wealthy and able to do a great deal of good, I shall do as much as my means permit. If people accuse me of wicked deeds, I shall console myself by not committing them. If I encounter ingratitude, I shall pity those who have appreciated my kindness toward them." Thus every day a new impression led me to that state of resignation which forms the happiness of those who no longer seek for earthly joys.

But, as I have already said, it was only by degrees and after much time had passed that such quieting thoughts managed to calm my distress. How often did I still feel my heart overcome by the thoughts of my loneliness! This thought, which was the one I most dreaded, was the one which everything, even the beauty of nature, was constantly evoking before me, despite my effort to banish it.

The house I lived in stood on the shores of the lake. The wind howled about it savagely; terrible hurricanes beat upon it as though they sought to tear it from its foundation. This spectacle of nature's violence was too much in keeping with my state of mind for me not to enjoy it. It seemed to symbolize my life. Come safely into harbor, I now watched the storm and thought of the calm that would follow. But when, following winter's wrath, the gentle charm of spring enveloped the spots where I had hoped to be so happy, the sight of them became more than I could bear. I no longer dared linger among them, I was forced to flee for fear of mourning the illusion I had conjured up there. The need of finding something to drive away the thoughts which I wished to expel from my heart made me more anxious than ever to own a little plot of ground of my own. The court of Baden had forbidden the authorities of Constance to allow me to buy anything there. Consequently I turned my steps toward Switzerland, and on my drives in that direction looked for some place that might be suitable.

The château of Arenenberg, small, dilapidated, but picturesquely situated, pleased me. The authorities of the canton of Thurgovia allowed me to purchase it. This was the more to their credit as all the other countries had repulsed me in accordance with the request of France, which wanted to send me into Silesia, Moravia or the Crimea. Consequently, although I was not allowed to live in the property I had just bought, I considered myself lucky not to be obliged to resell it again. The French Ambassador intrigued against me, and the Swiss Diet was on the point of being forced to take action, although to do so would have been a violation of state rights, as the canton of Thurgovia pointed out, when I notified the local authorities that to avoid further embarrassment for them I would postpone my residence in Thurgovia until more peaceful times. Therefore there was no decree issued either for or against me.

The reigning Princess of Hohenzollern lived a day's journey from Constance. She paid me a visit, and displayed all that maternal affection which she had shown me when I was a child. I spent several days at her palace, and was received in the most friendly fashion by the members of her family.

While I had been living at Constance the Grand Duke of Baden treated me with the greatest possible consideration. His wife [3] had entirely conquered him by her fine mind and personal beauty. She was the only one of our family who still maintained her rank. At first she had been feared, then admired and finally adored by her subjects. Her conduct was always exemplary. Her brilliant imagination, her keen and active intelligence, the charm of her features made one think that she was perhaps only pleasing, and it is always with astonishment that one discovers behind all these superficial charms a fine, well-balanced mind and a heart filled with good intentions. She wished to come and see me. The Grand Duke intended to accompany her. As soon as his intentions became known the diplomats, alarmed by a visit which they found hard to understand, took action immeately, and instead of the visit I expected I had a call from an officer of the Grand Duke's household, who informed me that on account of the reiterated protests of the French envoy the Grand Duke was obliged to forbid my continuing to live on his territory. Thus once more I found myself a homeless wanderer and again forced, in spite of my desire not to have anything more to do with the different governments, to request one of them to offer me a refuge. I had not the slightest idea which way to turn, since all the members of our family were prisoners of the Holy Alliance. It was necessary for the members of this Alliance to agree, so that I might find some spot on which to live, and they never could make up their minds as to where that spot was to be. Consequently I was unable to secure the rest which I was so much in need of. I

wrote my brother to inform him of what was happening. He spoke to the King of Bavaria about it, and the King suggested that I come and live in his dominions. My brother had me buy a house at Augsburg, in order that this acceptance of a monarch's hospitality should place me directly under his jurisdiction, and that, at any rate, the Holy Alliance should no longer feel that they had the right of deciding my fate. The Duc de Vicence had been correct when he declared we should be at the mercy of those who had defeated us. At the moment I was leaving Paris he had implored me to place myself directly under the protection of the Emperor of Russia so as to be able to live quietly in Switzerland, where I intended to go. He assured me it was only with passports signed by that monarch that I could hope to be left in peace in a spot I selected. Wounded, however, by the Emperor's attitude toward me, I had declined to ask any favor of him. Now, in the same country where my brother was living, the protection of the King of Bavaria became extremely useful to me, and I hastened to accept his offer.

CHAPTER XX

CALM AFTER STORM (MAY 1817–1820)

Augsburg—A Trip to Munich—A Trip to Leghorn—The Last Efforts of Louis—Return to Augsburg—Napoleon and Lally-Tolendal—Scenes with Cardinal Fesch and Louis—The Queen's Memoirs—Monsieur de Flahaut's Marriage—"Calm After Storm."

I DECIDED to live at Augsburg because I had been told it was quiet and without social gaieties. Society did not attract me, all I wanted was tranquillity and the affection of those about me. I found both there. Before settling down in the house I had bought I went to Munich [1] to see the King. He possesses the greatest gifts a sovereign can have, a warm-heartedness which misfortune cannot chill, a tact which seeks to conceal the favors this kindness bestows, and a graciousness of manner which on this occasion indicated a purely paternal interest in my well-being. My reception was a thoroughly cordial one, and the King took care to display as much consideration toward me as he would have done in the past. Doubtless, unlike so many other people, he did not feel that in order to annihilate a lost cause it is necessary to be rude to a person whom a short time before one would have been flattered to have as a guest.

Nor have I the slightest criticism to make of the Queen or Prince Charles, the King's second son. The latter particularly, whose affection for my brother had increased with our misfortunes, took especial pains to make my stay in his country a pleasant one. The local authorities, following the example set by their master, treated me with the utmost deference, and even the ordinary people seemed anxious to make me forget I was among strangers.

I was greatly grieved to have been so long separated from my elder son. His father consented to have him come and spend two months with me. This was a great consolation in the midst of all my sorrows. My husband also was anxious to see my younger son. I decided to take a trip to Italy. I left in June 1818 for the purpose of taking sea-baths at Leghorn. The journey through a country still filled with memories of my brother was a source of satisfaction to me. Every new road, every new or rebuilt public building was a token of his administration. "That was built when the French were here," people would say; and I enjoyed seeing how a régime—in spite of having been overthrown and daily slandered, although its benefits were still visible everywhere—had done only good wherever it had ruled. The gay vivaciousness of the Italians reminded me of the French and contributed toward making me feel happy. In the mood I had lately been in, the gravity of the Northern races had been more congenial to me for a time, it had been more in keeping with my own feelings; but the entertainment we derive from new objects, although it may tend to become tiresome in the long run, still does us good by distracting our attention from our own troubles. Under such a beneficent sky our grief grows less poignant even though we make no conscious effort to shake it off. At the sight of such an exuberant spirit of vitality as eddies all around you the eyes sparkle once more, and the wounded heart beats again. Brought up amidst the stately buildings of France I was amazed to find that mere ruins could produce a more impressive effect than our most stately edifices. How did the days of the Romans manage to produce such marvels? How far away from them we seem! The thought which consoled me for the difference existing between their buildings and ours was that then the workmen were slaves, now they are free men, laboring of their own accord.

The widow of Marshal Ney, who happened to be in

Italy just then, came to stay with me. This old friend gave me all the details of the dreadful calamity that had befallen her family and all her unavailing efforts to save her husband. Everywhere her prayers had been in vain, and even at the audience which the Duc de Berry had granted her he had said: "I cannot have my own way against the opinions of the King's advisors. Moreover, you will admit yourself, my dear Duchess, that as long as a single one of those officers remains alive the King's throne is in danger." A little while before the execution took place, the Marshal had embraced his children tenderly and had forbidden them ever to attempt to avenge his death. He had added that he forgave his enemies. While his wife, her voice broken by sobs, spoke of the hope she still had in the King's clemency he had replied, "Go and ask him to pardon me if you want to. I do not intend to do so." Everywhere she had been repulsed. At that time it was not the fashion to grant pardons. At last, accompanied by her sister, she had reached the Tuileries and begged everyone to be allowed to see the King. "You cannot see him now," an officer had replied. "His Majesty is having breakfast and it might disturb his digestion."

All her misfortunes had given the Duchess an energy of character which she did not naturally possess. Her principal qualities had been her sensitiveness, her kindness, her gentleness and her frankness. Moreover she had the charm and attractiveness of a person of many social accomplishments. Now that she had become the sole support of her four boys she realized the importance of her new duties. Although she knew the principal incidents of my life she had previously been unaware of my private misfortunes.

It was probably this fact that caused her to use her influence to bring about the reconciliation between me and my husband which the latter appeared to desire. He had hurried to Leghorn as soon as he heard I was

there, selected lodgings close to where I was staying, and took care that I should be frequently informed of his intense desire to have me leave Bavaria and settle in Italy. It was even arranged that, when we had our first interview, my children should come in, throw themselves on their knees and implore us not to continue to live apart. Who would have thought that at the very time he was making these efforts to bring me back to him, my husband was having a book published in which he declared that he had been constrained by force to marry me? Was this not enough in itself to destroy all hopes of a reconciliation? At any rate my decision had been made, once for all. It was a question of life and death to me. Nor, simply for my children's happiness, could I consider allowing them to witness such a spectacle of domestic misery as my memories of the past convinced me would occur in the future. My husband's character had not changed in the slightest. The reason was simple enough. We can correct something we know is wrong, but cannot cure ourselves of traits of character we consider admirable. Such faults increase as time goes on. A distrust of one's own ability and that of others, a generosity which prompts one to make gifts, while doubting the sincerity of the thanks expressed, a severely critical attitude toward everything great and small, and a constant contempt for the feelings and opinions of others, all combine to estrange people and cause us to receive nothing but ingratitude in spite of what we may have done for others.

The Emperor had preferred my husband to his other brothers. He had educated him and considered him as a son. Perhaps, however, he had sometimes treated him too severely. Once, for example, having locked Louis in his room to do his lesson in mathematics, the Consul came in and found a volume of Rousseau and some poetry on the table. He threw everything out of the window and put my husband under arrest for several days. I often

heard the Emperor declare that it was the works of Rousseau which had spoiled my husband's mind, that he had read too much of that distinguished author, whose worst quality, I always thought, was to expect others to behave better than he did himself. My husband combined with an acute sensitiveness a desire to love his fellow men and to help them. At the same time, however, he suffered from the delusion that they all wished to deceive him and do him harm. I remember the Emperor one day, speaking of my husband, said: "Louis has created a world of his own. He does not even understand what marriage means. He believes literally the saying that husband and wife are one. Consequently he is constantly surprised that when he is sick his wife should be well, that she can like dancing if he does not, and that she can feel warm when he feels cold." This was so true that I could not suppress a smile. These few phrases had summed him up completely.

The annoyance I felt at my husband's behavior, the memory of my former suffering and the fear of being obliged to endure it all again caused me to fall seriously ill, and I did not think I should recover. As soon as I was better, and when the only thing I wanted was to leave Leghorn as soon as possible, my husband asked to be allowed to come to see me. For the first time in my life I refused one of his requests. He did not wish me to return to Germany, and I constantly feared that he would take my second son away from me in order to force me to stay. I promised to bring the little boy often to see him and to treat the father of my children with all the respect to which he was entitled. I added that, after all we had suffered, the only way by which we could hope to forget the past was to live apart. I learned later that he continued to try to have our marriage annulled, but that the assembly of cardinals after meeting expressly to examine the case decided there was no reason to do this.

As for me I returned [2] to Augsburg and there finally was able to be quiet. Nothing disturbed my ordinary occupations. I spent all my time reading. I continued my studies of the arts and paid no attention to politics. I should have been ashamed to do so, in view of what people said about me. I sought to improve my mind and especially to learn to judge things at their proper value. Although living on foreign soil I was surrounded by objects from home. All the new books, pamphlets and newspapers that appeared were sent to me. A generous gesture on the part of a member of any political group made my heart beat faster. But I was indignant if people behaved badly. I felt ashamed to see my countrymen display either lack of will-power or cowardliness. I desired all the men belonging to a great nation to be equally great, and when I saw them swayed by petty ambitions my patriotism was as much hurt as though I shared their faults.

Another thing that made a deep impression on me was to hear all parties attack Emperor Napoleon with equal fury. No one was sufficiently proud to keep still, all gave way to the fashion of the day. Even the kings, jealous of a king greater than they were, after forming an alliance to overthrow him, kept on seeking to sully his reputation. They did not stop to think that sooner or later it would be on their own heads that this disdain they pretended to feel toward another sovereign would fall.

The destruction of that respect for the throne with which a truly great man had just inspired people annihilated for years to come the feeble prestige that ordinary monarchs still enjoyed. On the other hand, the desire for freedom was so intense throughout the nation that, conscious of her glory, she forgot the man who had won it for her. Those who defended the national interests believed they could obtain from a dynasty founded on old traditions the liberty which in self-defense that dynasty

was bound to suppress. To be sure the nation, either of her free will or because she was forced by foreign armies, was permitted to break the bond of gratitude which bound her to the Emperor. But at least, after having for so long helped the genius to carry out his plans, she now had no right to insult him.

Of course there were only a few people who understood the Emperor Napoleon's character or were brilliant enough to be able to form an idea of his genius. I myself, living beside him and better able to observe him than anybody else, had not realized his greatness in the midst of all the celebrated men who surrounded him. It was only now that the childishness of those who sought to belittle him and the mediocrity of his successors taught me how great he had been. Judging him impartially, what other ambition could one attribute to him than of founding a great Empire and new, useful and permanent laws? Without any predominating taste or habit, lacking all those passions which cause a man to lose his self-control, the Emperor devoted his days and nights to this great task. Was it not jealousy and hatred that alone had prevented his continuing it? Thus, in order to judge him, one must not isolate him from the circumstances in which he lived. He has been called a despot. But what punishment did he inflict on those who later boasted of having betrayed him and of whose intrigues he was well aware? All he did was to banish them for a few months to their country homes. Since then have the kings shown themselves equally magnanimous? Time will make people more just toward the Emperor, not only in their criticism of his character but in their appreciation of what he accomplished.

When a change of fortune raises us above the crowd, exposing us to its gaze, it should be easier to judge us without making a mistake. There should be a greater unanimity in the impression we create. Yet no one was farther above the masses and at the same time more

diversely criticized than Emperor Napoleon. Each one wished to see him and describe him in his own way. Even the comments of those who were the most favorable toward him were frequently absurd. Sometimes he was pictured as the hero of a melodrama, a fascinating charmer, a tyrant. Then again people would deny that he had either courage or intelligence. The famous Madame de Staël in her attack on him made many mistakes. I can understand that her exile had embittered her, but her unfair and hostile attitude is too evident on every page of her writings. Her hatred has something vulgar about it, and lacks the distinction one would expect from such a woman, particularly when dealing with such a man.

She is not the only one to be mistaken in her judgments. The facts were falsified even in the most insignificant details. It was said that when the Emperor spoke to women he did so curtly and in rude terms. It is true that he made them feel uncomfortable, but it was on account of his unexpected questions, which it embarrassed them to answer. Yet he never did more than make a mild witticism even to those who had made remarks about him and deserved a reproof. He would step up to them and say smilingly, "And how is the tongue wagging today?" The Emperor thought that woman's sole interest was, and should be, how she was dressed. Women's influence in any other field of activity annoyed him. Consequently, at the state receptions the few words he said to them always referred to that subject.

"How becomingly you are dressed! Is that the latest fashion? With that helmet-shaped hat you resemble the goddess Minerva. You look like a shepherdess or the wife of a sultan today." Once when I was present he said to the wife of an ambassador, "It seems to me that your wreath of roses and your red sash don't go together. The combination does not conform to the laws of dress." The lady, much embarrassed, did not know what to say.

When the reception was over I reproached the Emperor for having upset her.

"Was not I right?" he answered.

"Yes, but she will take the matter to heart and feel very much hurt over it."

"You do not understand such matters, my daughter. Do you mean to say you do not know that women are always pleased at being noticed, even though one criticizes them a little?"

Perhaps he was wrong in this; I am inclined to think so. But I am simply explaining his point of view and the reason for which he was feared, fears which expressed themselves by declaring that he was a man who could say only disagreeable things to women.

A more justly founded charge was that of being too violent in his expressions. But this never amounted to those bursts of rage which people talked about. These were the two occasions on which I saw him the most wrought up about anything:

Once it was against his uncle Cardinal Fesch. The matter under discussion related to the affairs of the Church. The Emperor considered it ridiculous for people to be obliged to pay for the sacraments, but admitted that the priests were not well enough off. "There is only one thing to do, introduce the tithing system again," declared the Cardinal. On hearing these words the Emperor lost his temper. As a member of the Emperor's family, although lacking his intelligence and force of character, the Cardinal considered he had a right to his own point of view. The Emperor, greatly annoyed that one of his relatives should suggest something so contrary to his whole system of government, strode up and down, and taking his snuff box in his hands dashed it violently on the floor, then left the room. This was the only sign of rage he gave.

Another time when my husband was obstinately opposing the Emperor's plan to unite Flushing and Nimeguen

to France, the Emperor delivered a tirade against the Dutch, calling them a nation of petty tradespeople who had sold themselves to England. In his rage he used a number of insulting epithets. My husband after having held his own for some time finally said quite calmly, "If you have such a poor opinion of the Dutch, why do you want to make them your subjects?" This remark quieted the Emperor immediately. He pinched the King's ear and went out. Nothing more was said about the matter.

Much has been said in regard to the Emperor's way of looking at people, and what a piercing glance he had. No matter how deeply hidden a secret might be, he seemed to be able to discern it. This was absolutely true. How could you keep a secret from someone who when he looked at you seemed to know all about it? At the same time, as everybody felt embarrassed and uneasy when in his presence, it was difficult for him to discover a man's real character. He managed to find out what people sought to conceal, but not what they really were. Only when you trust someone do you display your true nature.

It was part of the Emperor's policy to gather about him men of ability, irrespective of their political ideas. In order to do this he knew so well how to make himself agreeable that it was hard to resist him. The Comte de Lally-Tolendal, who by his eloquence had redeemed his father's memory,[3] had nevertheless not been able on account of political events to regain possession of his father's estates, which had been sequestered. Shortly before the marriage of his daughter, who had been brought up with me by Madame Campan at Saint-Germain, Monsieur de Lally-Tolendal, having no dowry to give her, wrote the First Consul about it. The Consul granted him one hundred and fifty thousand francs. Monsieur de Lally-Tolendal went to Saint Cloud to express his thanks, and received a cordial reception. The Consul said to him: "I cannot conceive why, having taken a brilliant part in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, and not

having compromised himself in any of the bloody excesses which later took place, Monsieur de Lally does not do his share in serving the interests of regenerated France."

The Count replied, "The King of England saved me from the great danger I was in during the Revolution by claiming I was an English gentleman. Since then I have received an allowance from that monarch. Can I be like the bat in the fable who declared, according to circumstances, 'I am a bird, look at my wings; I am a mouse, look at my fur'?"

"But," answered the Consul, "in what language was it that you defended your father? In what language did you defend your King?"

"In French."

"Then, Monsieur de Lally, you should realize that we always belong to a country in whose language we have expressed such noble sentiments."

This is an example of the way in which the Emperor knew on appropriate occasions how to make the most flattering and agreeable remarks. But Monsieur de Lally, although much touched, persisted in his refusal to take a government post, but remained perfectly quiet either in Paris or on his son-in-law's estate near Bordeaux.

How can we be expected to believe people who, after having faithfully served a man so appreciative of their talents and capacities, suddenly deny that they ever acted of their own free will and complain of having been forced to adopt a line of conduct which they themselves decided on? But such things were to be expected. A new dynasty is always criticized, and still more severely if it is overthrown. Small-minded people always use insults as a means both of justifying their past conduct and of securing future advancement. Both these things happened in our case.

I had reached the point of not worrying so much

about all the absurd tales that were told about me. I could do nothing in regard to them. It was part of a deliberate plan. Even my mother's name, which until then had been respected, was now the subject of ridiculous anecdotes. A woman who pretended to be an adept at sorcery went so far as to make up a completely untrue and improbable set of memoirs about her. Sometimes, too, a series of letters said to have been written by her would make its appearance. The foreigners also, on their own account, went about collecting stories of obviously improbable incidents. These stories they would publish and pretend to think them true.

A clever man to whom I one day spoke of how annoyed I was to see the public continue to be interested in my affairs said: "You cannot expect it to be otherwise. It is because of your lofty rank. Whether you do something or remain quiet, whether your behavior is admirable or the reverse, does not alter the matter. As long as people believe that on account of your former connections you may still be dangerous, they will fear you and be curious about you." I was struck by the truth of this remark and it made me still more indifferent to what was said about me. Then, too, temporary unpopularity is not worth worrying about. As time goes on, one may hope to be judged impartially. Death brings us a step nearer this final verdict, and knowing it is bound to come at last we can bear the present with resignation.

Everywhere I went it was curiosity rather than sympathy that caused most people to want to know me. I was often amused to see how entirely people's opinions changed as soon as they had actually seen me. Several persons admitted this to me afterwards.

A queen who is said to have been closely involved in great events, the stepdaughter and sister-in-law of the greatest general the world has ever known, must, so some people think, be capable of putting herself at the head of an army and leading troops into battle the way Jeanne

d'Arc and Jeanne de Montfort did. People imagined her tall, robust and dark, with a proud, hard face and strongly modeled features, and they found themselves in front of a feeble, thin, blonde woman whose face bore the marks of sorrow still more clearly than those of time. As I have already said, I owed many friends to the fact that people had been prejudiced against me in advance. Therefore I ought not to complain. If I had had the misfortune to be born to a crown I could have hoped to preserve only supporters. As it is, I now possess friends. These persons who came to like me, after at first being merely curious about me, are the ones to whom I felt I must make myself better known through these memoirs.

I had never thought of writing my memoirs. Only after the Emperor's divorce, when I heard someone blaming my brother for having agreed to it, I realized how difficult it is for truth to become widely known. In a few moments I had noted down all the details of this event, and that was all the writing I had ever done. Madame la Comtesse de Nansouty, an exceedingly clever woman, was at Aix-la-Chapelle when I was there in 1812. She was very anxious to have me write the story of my life. I assured her repeatedly I should never have patience enough to do so. "Well, then, just tell it to me," she said, "and I will write it down as we go along." The next day, indeed, she brought me an account of some incidents of my childhood which I had told her the day before. But they were too cleverly written. It did not sound like me. Although quite willing to admit the excellence of this system I confessed that I did not care to hear myself speaking in any other voice than my own. The book never got any further than the first page, which she kept.

Now, in a perfectly tranquil spot, my heart and head still full of the events which have just taken place, I have tried to sort them out. It has not been difficult. Truth is always easy to tell. When one does not have to try to

construct a plot anyone is clever enough to relate just what happened. I had so often been obliged to examine all my past actions that my entire life was vividly present in my mind. It was easy enough to recall my feelings on different occasions. This habit of dwelling on what had occurred in the past had a great deal to do with keeping my grief unassuaged. But as I wrote on, I felt a sensation of relief come over me, as though the weight of the past, which had so long oppressed my mind and spirits, was gradually diminishing. It seemed as if I were confiding my troubles to a friend, and I already began to experience that forgetfulness of our ills which generally only time can bring.

The trouble with memoirs generally is that they do not give a clear enough idea of our social position and the nature of our relations to those in power. Personal vanity causes us always to try to make ourselves unduly important, as, for instance, when we pose as having given advice on occasions when we merely obeyed someone else's instructions.

As far as I am concerned, although I saw a great deal of the Emperor, I should be entirely wrong if I said I ever had the least influence over him. While I really did consider myself as his daughter, I, like everyone else, was so much in awe of him that I rarely ventured to address him unless he spoke first, and my replies were frequently confused. He even said to me one day: "People tell me you are clever. I don't know anything about it. I always feel as though you were ten years old. It is the same with Eugène. I have never been able to get used to hearing him reason out something logically." And the Emperor added: "That is the trouble with parents when they get old. They can never realize that children grow up, and sometimes could actually teach them a lesson."

My mother was the only person I ever saw who was entirely at her ease with the Emperor, the only one who

had the slightest influence over him, and this was only in minor matters.

In my solitude at Augsburg my days were so peaceful and quiet that my health began to improve. In order to live on, I required a life free from all sensations, even those of happiness. Perhaps the latter would have killed me. I was satisfied to be able to recall the past without regret. Then, too, close at hand I had the best of consolations, my brother, who frequently came over from Munich to see me. With such a friend life still was worth living.

I also received frequent letters from Monsieur de Flahaut. They always contained expressions of the warmest friendship, the most perfect admiration. He had married the young person who had given him such a cordial welcome in England. He was happy, and his happiness was dear to me because I felt I was at least partly responsible for it.

For a long while I had not known how to write him in a natural manner. Little by little I conquered my reserve by the thought that in him I possessed a true friend, someone who knew me better than anybody else did and whose solicitude would reward me for all the pain hostile criticism had caused me. The barrier which separated us safeguarded my peace of mind.

All that was left of the romantic side of my nature was the need of constantly perceiving nobility of soul in others. The only things which affected me were accounts of some heroic action. I was inclined to think that all those who were attracted to me must possess lofty ideals and although opportunity for intrigue sometimes attracts people as much as sympathy with misfortune I was never mistaken in my intuitions. I had had too much experience. When a person has suffered much himself and become aware of the intensity of human emotions through having either yielded to or curbed his own impulses, he knows the secrets of the human heart by what his own has

endured. Frequently the heart teaches us more than the most subtle mind could grasp.

I also read a great deal. In order to enjoy a book I had to find in it descriptions of the better elements of human nature rather than its weaknesses.

I preferred Rousseau weeping over misfortunes which never took place to Voltaire launching his epigrams at both the just and the unjust. I enjoyed the madness of Don Quixote and the common sense of Sancho more than the brilliant and yet depressing picture of society so admirably drawn in "Gil Blas." I had to have something that appealed to my emotions. Doubtless it was my heart that required nourishment rather than my brain. I also enjoyed authors who provoke reflection. La Bruyère, Massillon, Pope, Plato, "The Imitation of Christ," all those works which foster and encourage the purity and elevation of the soul charmed me more and more every day.

But the most delightful occupation of all was the education of my youngest son, who spent most of his time with me while his elder brother was in Italy with his father. I paid especial attention to his moral instruction. A man can teach good things, a woman inspires them; her words penetrate more deeply. What comes from the heart enters another heart more readily.

I will stop here. There is nothing left to tell. As I look back over my life the spectacle I contemplate no longer pains me. Entirely absorbed by my duties toward my husband, I had hoped to find my happiness in a pleasant domestic life. Alas, I was sorely mistaken. I sought refuge in a sincere affection; I thought that in order to be happy one needed only to be loved, that a pure and tender attachment formed life's fairest jewel. Again I was wrong. Perfection is not to be found in a human heart, and I sought it in vain. Public admiration seemed to me for a moment to be a compensation. That too was taken from me, and I was obliged to steel my heart against this new blow. I felt I had counted too much on human

gratitude, and from then on I decided to do good without expecting any return.

Having been disappointed in everything I shall seek to create my own happiness without counting on anything or anybody else. I shall love my fellow beings, I shall do what I can to help them, I shall expect no gratitude. In the past I hoped in vain to obtain some appreciation. The sight of unhappiness and distress will always attract me, and if I can soothe it I shall do so. That is the true, perfect joy since it is something no one can take from us.

I therefore believe I have found the real road to happiness and I look forward to the future with serenity. Although I am alone, exiled from my home, mourning the terrible fate of the benefactor of my family, I often say to myself: "My life, however, is over. No longer need I fear passions. I have conquered them. No longer do I fear misfortune. I am able to bear it. And if I have found a way in which to be quieter and to improve, what else can I hope for myself? Only this, that I may live a little longer in the memory of my dear compatriots, in the hearts of my friends, and at last die in the arms of my children. Such is my last wish."

HORTENSE.

Augsburg, 1820.

APPENDIX

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS WRITTEN BY NAPOLEON I TO QUEEN HORTENSE FROM JUNE 10, 1796 TO JUNE 10, 1815

The originals of all the following letters, with one exception, are part of the rich archives of Prince Napoleon. Preserved by Queen Hortense, they passed from her hands into those of her son Napoleon III, then to Empress Eugénie and on her death became in 1920 the property of Prince Napoleon.

Of the forty-eight letters which are in existence, some have already been published either by the Queen herself or in the *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er^,* and some in other volumes. In order to present the whole of this correspondence between the Emperor and his stepdaughter, we have included the letters already known, stating where they have previously appeared.

The first letter of the collection is dated Milan, 22 Prairial, Year IV (June 10, 1796).

The memoirs of the Queen contain an account of the circumstances under which it was written. General Bonaparte, who had married Josephine on March 9, 1796, had left Paris, March 11 in the evening. His wife was to follow him, but not until June 26.

At that time, Hortense, who was not yet thirteen years old, was at the boarding-school kept by Madame Campan in Saint-Germain. She and her brother had both felt much hurt over their mother's remarriage. Hortense was sulky and did not wish to write the General. Madame Campan, however, who appreciated the growing celebrity of Bonaparte, insisted she should do so. Hor-

tense finally yielded although with great reluctance. She says: "My letter centered around one idea and might be summed up as follows: I have been told of your marriage with my mother. What surprises me is that you, whom I have so often heard speak badly of women, should have made up your mind to marry one of these creatures."[1] The General's reply "was very long and written in an extremely difficult hand, practically undecipherable," so much so in fact, that it was not till years later that, thanks to the Consul's secretary, Bourrienne, Hortense finally learned "all the kind phrases it contained."

Here is the letter of Bonaparte. In it he appears in an attitude to which we are not accustomed. The great leader has become a tender and affectionate papa.

The original is entirely in the Emperor's handwriting. On the document itself the words in italics are printed:

At Headquarters, Milan, 22 Prairial
Year IV *of the Republic one and inseparable.*
Bonaparte, Commander in Chief of the Army in Italy

To Mademoiselle Hortense:

I have received your charming letter. In the midst of the horrors of war, there is nothing more delightful than to be reminded of those dear children whom I am fond of both on their account and because they belong to the person whom I care for more than anyone else in the world.

You are a naughty, a very naughty girl. You wish to make me contradict myself. You should know,

[1] Hortense must have sent this letter toward the end of Germinal of the Year IV (1796), for on Floréal 5 (April 24) Bonaparte wrote Josephine: "I have received a letter from Hortense. It is quite charming. I shall write her. I am very fond of her and I shall send her soon the perfumes she would like to have." (Letter published by Frédéric Masson, *Madame Bonaparte,* page 26.)

charming Hortense, that when we speak ill of men, we make an exception in our own favor; when we speak ill of women, we except the one whose charm and gentle ways have captured our heart and engrossed all our attention. . . . And then, as you know very well, your mother is not to be compared with anyone else on earth. No one can unite her never varying gentleness with that indescribable something that affects all those who come near her. If anything could add to the joy I feel in belonging to her, it is the welcome responsibilities it involves toward you. I will act as though I were your father, and you shall love me as though I were your best friend. . . . But I am cross with you and cross with your dear mamma. She promised to come and see me and she has not come. Time goes slowly when we are far from those we love. Think of how glad I should be to see you in Paris (?), to argue with you and tell you terrible tales. Do not forget me entirely. A kiss to Eugène, to whom I ought to write. Believe me, yours forever,

BONAPARTE.

P.S. You should have received the little box of perfume. I will bring you a hundred pretty things.

On January 4, 1802, Hortense married Louis Bonaparte. This marriage still further strengthened the ties between her and her stepfather. One notes the same affectionately teasing tone that appeared in the first letter in the following, written while the First Consul was on a trip to Rouen, Havre and Dieppe. He did not date it, but the allusion to his return makes it plain that it was written Brumaire 22, Year XI (November 13, 1802).[1]

[1] The original is in Napoleon's hand and signed. On a copy made during the lifetime of Hortense the latter has written "After the return from the trip to Rouen in 1802."

MADAME HORTENSE LOUIS:

Your mamma is well. She will be at Saint Cloud tomorrow at midnight. The big booby (*gros benêt*)[1] is dashing about, and looks after all the pretty women he meets, and dances every night. We are both well and love you as much as you deserve. As you probably have a pretty good opinion of your deserts this is saying a lot. Give a kiss and a friendly smack (*bon soufflet*) to fat Louis from me.

Always yours,

B.

Years went by. Madame Louis Bonaparte had become Princess Louis, wife of the Constable of the Empire. Since her first letter in 1796, she had never written to her stepfather. But in 1804, as his fête-day, August 15, drew near, her new position made it obligatory for her to present her best wishes on that occasion. She writes: "During one of the Emperor's trips to Boulogne, Caroline came to see me about sending him good wishes for his birthday. . . . Together we composed two letters which were practically identical. The answer to Caroline was merely dictated to a secretary and signed by the Emperor. The answer to me was charming and entirely in the Emperor's own handwriting."

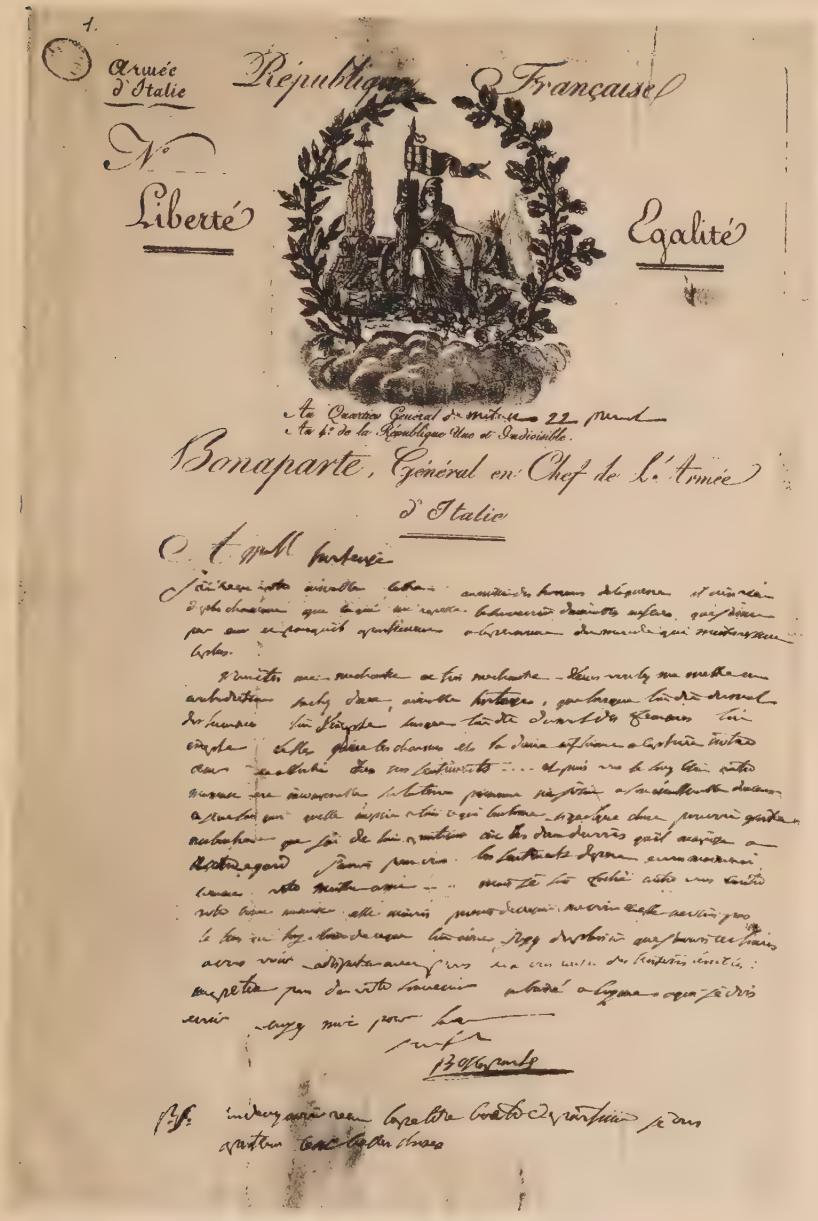
Here is the letter, dated August 15, 1804. Hortense was then expecting her second son, Prince Napoleon Louis, who was born on October 11, 1804.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

I was about to write you and ask you to tell me how you were, as for the last month, since Eugène brought me your letter, I have had no news about you. I am anxious to hear about your health. Your pregnancy may render it[2] far from good.

[1] Eugène, who since October 13, 1802, had been Colonel of the *chasseurs de la Garde des consuls.*

[2] The day before, April 14, 1804, Napoleon writing to Josephine said, "I do not hear from Hortense any more than if she were in the Congo. I am writing her to scold her." (*Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine,* page 46.)


1.

Armée d'Italie

République Française

Liberté

Egalité

Au Quartier Général de Milan 22 prairial
An 6e de la République Une et Indivisible.

Bonaparte, Général en Chef de l'Armée d'Italie

A Madame Hortense

FACSIMILE OF THE FIRST LETTER FROM NAPOLEON TO QUEEN HORTENSE
In the Collection of Prince Napoleon

I value your good wishes and you may be sure that nothing can alter the fatherly affection I have felt toward you from your earliest childhood. Your peace of mind, your health, your happiness, like those of your brother, are among the things which concern me deeply.

Write me occasionally. Tell me what is happening to *Monsieur le connétable,*[1] whom I never hear mentioned, and do not forget to give two kisses from me to Monsieur Napoleon.[2]

Trusting the Almighty may watch over you and protect you,

NAPOLEON.

Ponte-de-Briques, 27 Th.

Hortense always enjoyed match-making. She was particularly interested in arranging the future of the girls who had been her fellow pupils at Saint-Germain. Thanks to her, Madame Campan's school might be compared to a florist's nursery from which emerged a number of the wives of the imperial nobility.

Napoleon knew his stepdaughter's hobby. Three days after sending her the foregoing letter, he sent her the following one, August 18, 1804, written entirely and signed by him.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

I send you a demand in marriage for one of Madame Campan's pupils. See what you can do to arrange matters. The officer who makes the demand is a man of merit.

Two kisses to Monsieur Napoleon. A thousand pleasant things to you and reproaches to Louis, who fails to let me know where he is and what he is doing.

NAPOLEON.

Ponte-de-Briques. 30 Th.

[1] Louis Bonaparte.
[2] Hortense's eldest son, Prince Napoleon Charles.

August 15, 1805, is drawing near. Hortense sends birthday greetings to the Emperor, who since August 2 has been at Boulogne. She herself has accompanied her husband, who, having been appointed commander of the reserve troops of the army which plans to invade England, prefers to take the waters at the little village of Saint-Amand rather than remain at his headquarters at Lille.

A messenger brought the following letter written and signed by the Emperor to Louis and his wife, who were stopping at the Petit-Château de la Croissette near Saint-Amand. It should bear the date of August 12, 1805 (24 Thermidor, Year XIII).

I received with much pleasure, my dear little girl, your letter which was as charming as everything that comes from you. You may think that I am becoming very much a doting parent, but what you tell me of Napoleon's cleverness makes me feel as though I were hearing about a third generation, for I knew his father when the latter was so small that I could consider him as belonging to the second generation.

I have been several days at Boulogne. I shall remain for some time. I should be glad to have you write me, and you would be more than kind to bring Napoleon and come and spend five or six days here. Arrange this with Louis. This will make your stay at the health resort a little gayer. They tell me that Saint-Amand is dreary.

Good-by, my dear little girl. A thousand loving kisses. Napoleon junior, whom I left at Saint Cloud, is very well.[1] As for me I should be delighted to see you. You will never know how fond of you I am and how much I care for you. I wrote yesterday and sent the letter by messenger to little Mother.

NAPOLEON.

[1] The Queen had only taken her eldest son to Saint-Amand with her and left the younger one, Napoleon Louis, at Saint Cloud.

A month later Napoleon writes from Saint Cloud where he is staying on the eve of his campaign which culminated at Austerlitz. On 19 Fructidor, Year XIII (September 6, 1805), he sent Princess Louis, who was still at Saint-Amand, the following letter. It is in his own hand.

MY DEAR LITTLE GIRL:

I was glad to get your letter. You know how fond I am of you, how much I have always admired you and how anxious I am to know that you are enjoying yourself and surrounded by the pleasures and pastimes that are suitable to your age. Give Napoleon a big kiss from me. Try to keep Louis good-tempered and less solemn. He has the qualities of a man of fifty. He should try to have the high spirits and good-humor of a man of twenty-five.

Good-by. I have such a lot to do. I hope you will be here before I leave.

NAPOLEON.

19 Fruct.

The Queen tells in her memoirs how, during this same campaign, the Emperor wrote her from Vienna "that he expected my son to prove worthy of his lofty destiny." The original of this letter is missing in the collection preserved by Prince Napoleon. But a copy made during the Queen's lifetime gives us the text. The note is dated 22 Frimaire, Year XIV (December 13, 1805).

I have received, my dear little Hortense, the letter from Napoleon, in which I recognize all his mother's tenderness and affection. I hope that as he grows up he may learn all that he must know in order to be worthy of his future position. Good-by, my dear little girl. You know that I shall always love you as much as I have since your childhood.

NAPOLEON.

Vienna, 22 Frimaire.

Hortense was bitterly disappointed when her husband refused to allow her to go to Munich to attend the marriage of her dearly loved brother Eugène to Princess Augusta of Bavaria (January 14, 1806). Napoleon was not able to interfere in time to have this refusal rescinded. The following letter is included in the *Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine*, Garnier's edition, page 237. Only the signature is in the Emperor's handwriting.

MY DAUGHTER:

Eugène arrives tomorrow and his wedding takes place four days from now. I should have been very pleased if you had attended this wedding; it is too late now. Princess Augusta is tall, handsome and full of good qualities. In every respect she will prove a sister worthy of you.

A thousand kisses to Monsieur Napoleon.

NAPOLEON.

At *Munich, January 9, 1806.*

On June 5, 1806, Princess Louis became Queen of Holland. Two weeks later she and her husband left for their new kingdom. Her memoirs tell of her writing from Laeken to her mother and then to the Emperor, who replied by the following note of which only the signature is in his hand.[1]

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I had news of you from Laeken. I was glad to hear you have been in good health. I am anxious to have a letter from you from the Hague where I know your arrival is impatiently awaited.

NAPOLEON.

Saint Cloud, June 24, 1806.

[1] Letter published by Monsieur de Brotonne in *Dernières lettres inédites de Napoléon Ier*, Paris, Champion, 2 vol. octavo, Vol. I, page 206.

On arriving in her new dominions, the Queen implored the Emperor's mercy "on behalf of a man condemned to death." Napoleon's answer was printed in his *Correspondance,* Volume XII, page 616. The original is merely signed.

MY DAUGHTER:

I received your letter written Thursday. You should have sent me the petition of the director of the Antwerp post office. As soon as you send it to me, I will have the matter looked into and try, out of affection for you, to have his brother's sentence commuted.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Saint Cloud, Sunday, June 29, 1806.

Hardly had they settled in Holland when the King and Queen left for Mayence, June 20. Hortense in the meanwhile had received from her stepfather the following letter, which like the foregoing one was not written in his hand but only signed. It is a reply to her letter of thanks for having granted her request, and her note contained the phrase, "Napoleon is continuing to learn fables, which he intends to recite to you. May he have the opportunity of doing so soon."

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I was glad to hear that Napoleon is well. I hope he will continue to learn fables and to train his memory. The waters will do you good, and the celebrations that are to take place in the autumn will give me a chance to see you. Do not doubt that I value the opportunity highly.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Saint Cloud, August 5, 1806.

Hortense remained at Aix-la-Chapelle and at Mayence, except for a few days in Holland, till the end of January, 1807. During this time she again had occasion to ask the Emperor to remit a prisoner's sentence as is shown by the following letter, which was very inaccurately reproduced in the *Correspondance,* Volume XIII, page 374. Only the signature is in the Emperor's handwriting.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter of September 24, from Aix-la-Chapelle. I sent the *Grand-Juge* the petition of the person you are interested in, in order that he may be pardoned. I am always glad to hear from you.

I trust you are well. Never doubt my friendship toward you.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Wurzburg, October 5, 1806.

From Wittenberg on October 23, 1806, the very day he gave Davout the order to enter Berlin, the Emperor wrote himself and signed the following note:

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I am glad to know you are at Mayence. Be happy and cheerful. My affairs are going very well. I hope I shall find Monsieur Napoleon a foot taller and a great scholar. A thousand kisses to both of you.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Wittenberg, October 23.

A few days later this was followed by another note, this time from Berlin, but in this case only the signature is in the Emperor's handwriting.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter of the 23d. I am glad to see that your children are growing up and that you are satisfied with your stay at Mayence. You may be sure of my affection for you and my pleasure in seeing you again.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

At *Berlin October 30, 1806.*

Hortense had her eldest son Napoleon Charles, then a boy of four, write the Emperor, but he was not deceived as to the real author of the letter. Monsieur de Brotonne gives his reply in his *Lettres inédites de Napoléon I^er^*, page 60; the text of the original was written by a secretary, but the letter was signed by the Emperor.

MY DAUGHTER:

I received your letter. I read the one of Napoleon. I imagine you guided his hand. He is not clever enough to turn such pretty phrases.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Berlin, November 8, 1806.

Hortense had hoped that she would be able to accompany her mother to Berlin where, it was said, peace was to be signed. The following letter, signed by the Emperor but not written by him, was a disappointment to her. She had sent the Emperor an ode written by Monsieur Desprez, who besides being her secretary also wrote verses.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter of the 21st. You may be sure I should have been glad to see you, but the Empress is not leaving just yet on account of my trip to Poland where I shall be busy for several days.

I have just had your letter of the 22d with an ode by Monsieur Desprez on the battle of Jena. It seemed very good to me.

Your affectionate father.

NAPOLEON.

Posen, November 29, 1806.

New Year's Day is drawing near and Napoleon Charles again feels the impulse to present his greetings in writing. But his manner of expressing them arouses the Emperor's suspicions as is shown in the following letter, entirely in his own handwriting and written January 3, 1807.

MY DAUGHTER:

I received your letter and that of Monsieur Napoleon which I presume you wrote. Consequently I can thank you for both of them. I wish you a happy, a very happy New Year. Give a kiss and a present from me to Napoleon and his brother, and always remember you have my fatherly affection.

NAPOLEON.

January 3

Another letter from the little prince, perhaps expressing his thanks for the present received, brought another answer from the Emperor; the original is merely signed.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter and that of Monsieur Napoleon. I still doubt whether he knows exactly what he is writing about, and fancy that the hand that guides his is that of his little mamma. In any case, give him a kiss from me. I should have liked to see him, but that pleasure must be postponed till my return which I trust will not be long delayed.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Warsaw, January 8, 1807.

The following letter written and signed by the Emperor is dated simply 22 without any further indication, but its text allows us to assign it to January, 1807. A week later, Hortense arrived at the Hague.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter. I was sorry to hear that you are leaving the Empress. I should have been glad to see you, but your subjects in Holland will be pleased to see you. Never doubt my affection. It is boundless. A thousand kisses to your two little ones.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

22.

Hortense intervened on behalf of Rosalie Marie Thérèse de Rancher, widow of the Marquis de Nadaillac, who in 1798 had married Jean François de Pérusse, Comte des Cars. After having been imprisoned on the island of Sainte-Marguerite during the early part of 1806, she had later been banished to Nice. The original of this letter is simply signed.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter of the twentieth. I cannot do anything for Madame des Cars. She is a scheming and evil woman. As soon as I return to Paris, I shall write Louis to have you join me there. You cannot imagine how pleased I shall be to see you and how fond I am of you.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

At *Warsaw, January 29, 1807.*

In the meanwhile the domestic misunderstandings between the King and Queen of Holland were known to everyone. The Emperor heard of them and in a letter

dated Finkenstein, April 4, 1807, severely rebuked his brother. Hortense describes the effect of this rebuke on Louis in the memoirs, and how the King asked her personally to deny the charges which had led to his receiving it. She adds: "I did as he wished, and in my letter to the Emperor I had the courage to say that I was happy." We have no copy of what the Queen wrote her imperial brother-in-law, but the following hitherto unpublished letter is undoubtedly a reply to it. The original of this is not in the Emperor's hand, but is signed by him.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I was glad to hear that your children are well. You know even better than I do that your first duty is to please your husband. I grant that he was wrong in displaying those jealous impulses, but after all they are a proof of how much he cares for you. You should try always to be with him and please him in every way.

Louis is fair, although he may at times have peculiar ideas. You will be entirely happy when you sacrifice everything, even what may appear to be your rights, to please him. As far as I am concerned, I shall be delighted to hear that the coldness which has often existed between you has vanished and that you are on as good terms with Louis as a person of your merit should be.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

At *Finkenstein, May 2, 1807.*

At the very time the Emperor was writing this letter containing such good but fruitless advice, a cruel blow had fallen on Hortense. Her eldest son Prince Napoleon Charles, then four and a half years of age, had fallen ill with a disease which the doctors first thought was measles, but which turned out to be croup. The little boy died

in the night of May 4, 1807, just fourteen years before his grandfather expired at Saint Helena.

On May 12, Napoleon had not yet received news of the tragedy. On that date, having heard the patient was slightly better, he wrote Josephine saying: "I hear that Napoleon is cured. I can imagine how worried his mother must have been, but measles is an illness to which anybody is liable." [1] Two days later Napoleon heard the truth and at once wrote to Josephine: "I can understand how deeply you must grieve over the death of poor Napoleon. You can understand how badly I feel about it." [2] At the same time he wrote Hortense, merely signing the letter.

MY DAUGHTER:

On learning the loss that we have just suffered, I thought of how deeply grief-stricken you must be. You must be brave. I am glad to know that you are going to Paris. Take care of your health in order not to increase the sorrow I already feel.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

At *Finkenstein, May 14, 1807.*

The blow was a terrible one to Hortense. She sank into a decline, in which she was unconscious of what was going on about her. She was taken to Laeken in Holland, where Josephine and Caroline Murat, Napoleon's sister, joined her at once and made vain efforts to console her. A few days later, Hortense with a few attendants left for the Pyrenees.

The violence of the Queen's grief and the form it assumed displeased the Emperor. He explained his feelings, affectionately but firmly, in the following letters:

[1] *Correspondance,* Volume XV, page 272.
[2] *Idem,* page 274.

MY DAUGHTER:

Everything I hear from the Hague makes it clear that you are not being sensible. No matter how natural your sorrow is, it should have some limit. Do not let it affect your health. Amuse yourself and learn that life is so full of troubles and can bring with it so many ills that death is not the most serious of all.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Finkenstein, May 20, 1807.*

MY DAUGHTER:

You have not written me a line. In your natural and profound grief, you have forgotten everything as though you had lost everybody at once. I am told that nothing interests you any more, that you are indifferent to everything. This is confirmed by your silence. This is not right, Hortense. It is not what you promised us you would do. Was your son everything in your life? Do not your mother and I matter at all? If I had been at Malmaison, I should have shared your sorrows, but I should also have wished that you continued to see your friends. Good-by, my daughter. Try to be cheerful. One must be resigned to fate. Keep well in order to accomplish all your duties. My wife grieves over your condition. Do not add to her sorrow.

NAPOLEON.[2]

June 2.

[1] This letter was first published by Bégin in his *Histoire de Napoléon,* Volume IV, page 319, then in the *Correspondance,* Volume XV, page 310, and finally by Blanchard Jerrold, *The Life of Napoleon III,* Volume I, page 432.

[2] This letter, published by Hortense in *Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine,* issued by Garnier, page 121, was reproduced in the *Correspondance,* Volume XV, page 380. The original, which is in the archives of Prince Napoleon, is in the Emperor's hand. It contains no indication as to where it was written but was sent from Danzig. In the text published by the Queen—*Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine*—an error of punctuation changes the sense of the first two sentences which we have reestablished from the original text which Blanchard Jerrold reproduces in fac-simile (Vol. I, page 433) and from a copy made for the Queen.

As she was going through Orléans on her way south, Hortense wrote her stepfather. He replied with the following letter in his own handwriting.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter dated Orléans. I am sorry to hear of your grief, but I wish you had more courage. Life means suffering, and an honorable man always attempts to control his feelings. I do not care to see you acting so unfairly toward little Napoleon Louis [1] and toward all your friends. Your mother and I had hoped that we meant in your life more than we actually do. I won a great victory on the fourteenth of June.[2] I am well and love you dearly. Good-by, my daughter. I embrace you affectionately.

NAPOLEON.[3]

Friedland, June 16, 1807.

The following is the Emperor's reply to a letter from Hortense dated June 18. The original is signed in his hand.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter of June 18. I am pleased to hear that your health is beginning to improve. I hope that after taking the waters you will come to Paris, where I expect to be. I should be very pleased to be able to tell you again what you already know are my feelings toward you.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

At *Tilsit July 5, 1807.*

[1] The Queen's second son, born October 11, 1804, died at Forli, Italy, in 1831.

[2] Friedland where Napoleon defeated the Russian forces commanded by Bennigsen, a victory which led to the peace of Tilsit.

[3] Published by the Queen in *Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine,* issued by Garnier, page 122, and reproduced in *Correspondance,* Volume XV, page 420.

On August 27, 1807, Hortense and Louis, who had recently effected a reconciliation, arrived at Saint Cloud. The Queen in her memoirs tells what a cold reception she received from Napoleon.

April 20, 1808, in her palace in the rue Cerutti, Queen Hortense gave birth to a son who later became Napoleon III.

Monsieur de Villeneuve was dispatched to take the news to the Emperor, who was then at Bayonne. The Emperor congratulated his stepdaughter.

MY DAUGHTER:

I hear that you have been happily delivered of a boy. I was greatly pleased to hear this. The only thing I need further to know in order to be entirely satisfied is that you are well. I am surprised that in a letter of the twentieth, from the Arch-Chancellor, he tells me nothing about it.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Bayonne, April 23, 1808.*

A few days later he writes again:

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I am glad to hear that every day you are regaining your health and that your son is well. I wish him to be called Charles Napoleon.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[2]

Bayonne, May 7, 1808.

After the birth of the little prince Hortense remained in Paris with her children in spite of the remonstrances of Louis, who wished to have Prince Napoleon Louis

[1] *Correspondance,* Volume XVII, page 38.—Original is merely signed.
[2] Original merely signed.

with him. A sort of intimacy sprang up between her and Caroline Murat, the Emperor's sister. The memoirs contain an account of the curious anecdotes the Queen heard from her sister-in-law. The Emperor, who at first had taken his brother's part, consented later not to oppose the wishes of his stepdaughter. That this was partially due to the influence of Princess Caroline is shown by the following letter:

MY DAUGHTER:

The Princess Caroline has told me how unhappy you are. It is a duty of mothers to attend to the education of their children up to the age of seven. Therefore you should keep Prince Napoleon with you. Moreover, the climate of Holland would be bad for him. His health is extremely important to me, and I should be very much displeased if he went there. As far as you are concerned, you ought to write strongly and frankly to the King, inform him how much you have suffered in the past, and ask him categorically how he intends to treat you in future. Your maids, your servants, your stable and your entire household should be separate. You are entitled to this, and it is quite right.

The King, at heart, cares for you and perhaps a frank and firm explanation will make him, once more, behave properly. At all events you have a right to be happy and the King is too reasonable not to realize that there is an age and a rank where everyone can claim his just deserts. If all the details that Princess Caroline gives me are true, there is not a mutually clear understanding between you.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

Bayonne, July 17, 1808.

[1] Original written and signed by the Emperor.

The Emperor left on October 29 for the Spanish front. Empress Josephine was living at the Palace of the Elysée. Before leaving, Napoleon had decided that Frenchmen occupying foreign thrones should not receive any income in France. The consequent reduction of her allowance, which was immediately put into effect by Louis, placed Hortense in an awkward position. Being short of funds, she dismissed her servants and went to live with her mother.

The Emperor upon hearing of this was much annoyed.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter. You were wrong to have dismissed your servants. That is not done. You should first have asked my advice. In your position, these things are important. I consider that during the Carnival season you should entertain and try to do the honors of Paris. If the King does not give you what is necessary to keep up your household I will see to it.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Valladolid, January 8, 1809.*

As a matter of fact, Napoleon shortly after this gave the Queen an allowance. At the same time he had a special fund set aside for her.

MY DAUGHTER:

Having set aside this year a fund of 60,000 francs on behalf of the poor widows and children of my soldiers and the other poor of my empire I have given orders to my *grand-maréchal du Palais* to place at your disposal a credit of 5,000 francs a month. These

[1] Original signed by the Emperor.

5,000 francs are to be distributed by your order to such persons as you may designate.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

From my imperial camp at Valladolid,
January 13, 1809.

On April 13, 1809, the Emperor left for the army taking Josephine with him as far as Strasbourg. Hortense also left Paris on April 27 to join her mother. The climate of Alsace did not agree with her, and as she wished to try the waters of Baden she went there with her two sons. To do so was to disobey the orders of the Emperor, who did not wish the young princes to leave France without his permission. When he learned what had occurred, he wrote the Queen an angry letter which was forwarded to her by Josephine.

MY DAUGHTER:

I am very much displeased that you should have left France without my permission and especially that you should have taken my nephews with you. As you are at the springs at Baden, stay there, but, an hour after having received this letter, send back my two nephews to the Empress at Strasbourg. They should never go outside of France. It is the first time I have ever been angry with you, but you should not do anything with my nephews without my permission; you should be aware of the bad effect a thing like that produces. As the waters at Baden do you good, you can stay there a few days, but, I repeat, do not lose a moment in sending my nephews to Strasbourg. If the Empress goes to take the waters

[1] Original signed. In her memoirs the Queen says the sum for her charities was 6,000 francs a month.

at Plombières, they will accompany her, but they should never go beyond the bridge of Strasbourg.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Ebersdorf, May 28, 1809.*

Hortense obeyed. From early in June, 1809, she was at Plombières with her children and remained there four months. The Emperor appreciated her prompt obedience.

MY DAUGHTER:

I received your letter. Plombières will complete what Baden began. I am glad to hear that the Grand-Duc de Berg[2] and the little boy are well. Try to recover yourself entirely and never forget my affection.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[3]

June 19 [*1809*]

Following the marriage of Napoleon and Marie Louise, Hortense and her husband effected a partial reconciliation. The Queen agreed to live in Holland. She said good-by to the Emperor at Compiègne on April 11, 1810, and arrived at Utrecht on the 14th, at Amsterdam on the 24th of the same month.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter. I am very pleased that you and your children arrived in good health. I am leaving tomorrow for Antwerp where I shall be May 1; I shall have news from you there. I am

[1] Published by the Queen in the *Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine,* Didot collection, Volume II, page 292. Not included in *Correspondance.* Original signed.

[2] Prince Napoleon Louis had received this title March 3, 1809.

[3] Original written and signed by the Emperor.

told that you are satisfied with the King and with Holland, and I am delighted to hear this.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Compiègne, April 26, 1810.*

The King and the Queen did not remain long together. On May 21, 1810, Hortense left Amsterdam for Loo. She remained only a few days on this royal estate and on June 1 set out for Plombières, where she arrived a few days later. There she received the following affectionate letter:

MY DAUGHTER:

I was glad to hear of your arrival at Plombières. I hope the waters there will do you good. Try to enjoy yourself. Take care of your health and do not worry about things that need not bother you. You must never doubt my affection or my regard.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[2]

At *Saint Cloud, June 12, 1810.*

On July 1, 1810, King Louis abdicated the throne of Holland in favor of his son under the Regency of the Queen. Napoleon wrote Hortense, who was still at Plombières, the following letter:

MY DAUGHTER:

You should have received a message from Holland informing you of the latest act of madness on the part of the King. I suppose you will advise me of everything and that you have not made any decision as yet. I shall write you as soon as you inform me of what was written you from there. I wish to

[1] Included in the *Correspondance,* Volume XX, page 369. Original signed.

[2] Original signed.

reunite Holland and France. I shall send you a copy of the letter I wish you to write to the council of the Regency if you have not yet answered them. I consider it would be proper for you to send one of your officers to bring back the Crown Prince. You will have him come to Plombières if you still intend to remain there some time. If not you could go to Laeken to meet him, and from there bring him back to Paris.[1]

Freed by the act of the King you can live quietly in Paris. I only wish to know also that you have quite recovered your health and that you are no longer worried.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[2]

At *Rambouillet, July 8, 1810.*

Just as she received this letter, Hortense heard what the King had been doing by a letter from Madame de Boubers, the governess of Prince Napoleon Louis, who had remained in Holland. She replied to the Emperor:

SIRE:

I have received no message from Holland except a letter from Madame de Boubers, who tells me of the King's departure. I enclose this letter. I was about to send it to your Majesty when I received your letter. At the same time I wished to inquire what I should do, for I only desire to act in accordance with your wishes. I am sending Monsieur de Marmol to bring back the Prince to me, since your Majesty allows me to do this. I am not well enough yet to travel as far as Laeken. At the same time if there is anything your Majesty wishes me to do I am better and I shall always try to do as you wish. The thought of living quietly near your Majesty is most

[1] Here follow two lines which on the original have been carefully made illegible, probably by the Queen herself.

[2] Original signed.

agreeable to me, and I beg you to believe that such is always the wish of your daughter,

HORTENSE.

If I receive any message I shall send it immediately to your Majesty.[1]

Plombières, July 10, 1810.

Hardly had this letter been sent when Monsieur de Spaen arrived at Plombières with a message from the *Conseil provisoire de régence.* Hortense at once communicated this document to the Emperor.

SIRE:

Monsieur de Spaen, member of the *Corps législatif,* has just arrived. He was sent by the Regency of Amsterdam to inform me of the King's abdication. I am sending everything to your Majesty and await your instructions.

Please accept, Sire, the assurance of the tender and affectionate sentiments of your daughter,

HORTENSE.[2]

Plombières, July 11, 1810.

The Emperor's plans changed rapidly. Having on July 9 signed the decree uniting Holland and France, on the 10th he sent Lauriston to bring the Grand-Duc de Berg back to Saint Cloud where his young brother already was. Before he had had time to receive any answer from Hortense, he wrote her as follows:

[1] Published by Ch. Nauroy, in "Le Curieux," No. 40, page 247, and by André Dubosq in *Louis Bonaparte en Hollande,* page 71. The original autograph letter is preserved in the Archives Nationales A.F. IV. 1720.

[2] Original autograph letter, signed, in the Archives Nationales A.F. IV. 1720 (second file).—This file also contains the original letters written the Queen by the President and members of the *Corps législatif,* the *Conseil provisoire de régence,* the proclamation of Louis to his subjects and the letter written by the King to the Emperor.

MY DAUGHTER:

I sent you a message the day before yesterday. As you have not written me it would seem as though you had not heard from Holland and did not know what had happened there.

I am sending Comte Lauriston, my aide-de-camp, to bring back the Grand-Duc de Berg, whom the King abandoned at Haarlem in great distress. Lauriston has orders to bring him back to Paris. Take the waters quietly and when your stay there is over, return to Paris.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

Rambouillet, July 10, 1810.

In the meanwhile the documents received by Hortense and forwarded by her to her stepfather had arrived at Rambouillet. The Emperor writes:

MY DAUGHTER:

I received your letters of the 11th. I see that the letters from Holland have finally reached you. We have no news of the King. We do not know where he has retired to and cannot understand this whim of his at all. Monsieur l'architrésorier [2] should have reached Amsterdam by now and the decree of annexation should already be known there. I send you the letter I think you should write to the President of the *Corps législatif* and the President of the *Conseil de gouvernement.* You will not in these letters give them any title.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[3]

At *Rambouillet, July 13, 1810.*

[1] Original signed.

[2] Lebrun, Duc de Plaisance.

[3] Published in the *Correspondance,* Vol. XX, page 540, and in Félix Rocquain, *Napoléon et le roi Louis,* page 289. This volume also contains the text of the letters the Queen was to write the Dutch authorities. The original is signed and is in the archives of Prince Napoleon.

Hortense followed the instructions of the Emperor, but after recommending the Dutch deputy de Spaen to him she expressed the desire to go and join her mother at Aix.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have received your letter of the 15th. I have also had the note regarding Monsieur de Spaen. I have had his name placed on the list of candidates. I see no reason why you should not go to Aix. This would please the Empress, who, I believe, is planning to spend some time at Geneva after taking the waters.

I expect Napoleon here tomorrow. I do not know where the King is. You may be quite sure that my only feeling toward him is one of pity.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Saint Cloud, July 10, 1810.*

The next day there was another letter in which the Emperor gave the mother news of her sons.

MY DAUGHTER:

Napoleon has just arrived. I hasten to inform you of the fact. I have placed him and his brother at Saint Cloud in the Pavillon d'Italie. (It is the building you knew as the Pavillon de Breteuil.)

I have just received official news of the King. He passed through Dresden on his way to the springs of Toeplitz in Bohemia. They tell me he behaved quite disgracefully during the last days he was in Holland and that he carried off more than 10 millions.[2] This last detail grieves me deeply.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[3]

Saint Cloud, July 20, 1810.

[1] Original signed.

[2] This accusation was false. Louis, before leaving Holland, had only sold a portion of his estates in that country and had merely conveyed a portion of his diamonds to a place of safety. See Frédéric Masson: *Napoléon et sa famille,* Vol. V, page 271.

[3] Original signed.

Finally there is another letter written a few days after the preceding one. Since the end of July Hortense had been at Aix.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter of August 6. I am glad to hear that your health is improving. Your children came to see me yesterday and are well.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

Trianon, August 10, 1810.

The following letter was published in the *Correspondance,* Vol. XX, page 159, dated January 22, 1810. The original, only signed by the Emperor, preserved in the archives of Prince Napoleon, bears the same date. But this must be the result of an error on the part of the secretary, and the date should be January 22, 1811. As a matter of fact it is impossible to attribute this letter to 1810, as at that time Napoleon had just frustrated the demand for a separation which, at the request of Hortense and Louis, he had submitted to the family council. Moreover, the Emperor had not given up hope of seeing a reconciliation take place between the King and Queen, and such a conciliation actually did take place in April, 1810. In 1811, on the contrary, following the protest issued by Louis on December 30, 1810, the Emperor was actively engaged in fixing the future status of the Queen and assuring her means of support. Our hypothesis is moreover completely corroborated by comparing the following letter with that written to Comte Daru, January 22, 1811, and published by Monsieur Léon Lecestre, *Lettres inédites,* Vol. II, page 109, in which the Emperor says: "I have had Saint-Leu sequestered. I am planning to have you send for Queen Hortense's man of

[1] Original written and signed by the Emperor. It was published by Monsieur de Brotonne in *Dernières Lettres,* Vol. I, page 502.

affairs, and to turn over this estate to him in order that the Queen may have full possession of it and make such arrangements regarding it as she sees fit."

The Emperor had already given the Queen the right to live at Saint-Leu, by the decree signed at Saint Cloud, July 20, 1810 (A.F. IV. 467 plaquette 3546). In the present instance it is the full ownership which he bestows upon her.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have given orders that Saint-Leu is to be turned over to you. Tell your man of affairs to take possession of this estate on your behalf and put it to rights. Make any arrangements there you please and change any of the household whom you do not like. You need a place in the country; you could not find a more agreeable one than Saint-Leu.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.

Paris, January 22, 1810.

Monsieur Pierlot, *receveur général* of the department of the Aude and regent of the Bank of France, who had been appointed intendant of the Empress Josephine's household after the divorce, was forced to suspend his payments. He owed Hortense several hundred thousand francs. Napoleon was obliged to intervene. It is to these financial difficulties that the following letter refers.

By the decree of December 26, 1810, the Emperor had allowed Hortense an income of 500,000 francs to be deducted from the two millions per year which the *sénatus-consulte* of December 13, 1810, had allowed to Louis. But the King, having by his letter of December 30, 1810, refused this allowance, Napoleon, by a degree signed at Saint Cloud April 24, 1811, the day after he wrote the Queen, turned over the entire allowance to Hortense "until the time when King Louis returns to France."

MY DAUGHTER:

As Pierlot has gone bankrupt, will you suggest somebody to be put in charge of your affairs. I have made a decree to settle the question of your allowance. Thus you will come into complete possession of the 2 millions. Select a steward in order to have your estates properly organized.[1]

You will return to my treasurer Estève what you have received from the Crown as soon as you take possession of your allowance. I except from this the sums paid out for the Grand-Duc de Berg, who will continue to receive this income, and I wish it to be spent entirely for him.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[2]

Saint Cloud, April 23, 1811.

Here is a reply to a letter in which Hortense sent her best wishes to the Emperor for his birthday.

MY DAUGHTER:

I have just received your letter. I appreciate all the sentiments you express and I thank you for them. Never doubt my affection.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[3]

Saint Cloud, August 17, 1811.

In the course of the summer of 1812, while Hortense, accompanied by her two sons, was taking the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle, the elder boy, Prince Napoleon Louis, fell ill with scarlet fever (July 7). The child's life was in danger for several days. It is to this incident that the following letters refer.

[1] Colonel Baron Moisson Devaux was appointed steward to the Queen by the decree of June 18, 1811.

[2] Original signed.

[3] Original signed.

MY DAUGHTER:

I was sorry to hear by your letter of the 11th that Napoleon was ill and I was pleased to learn, by the one of the 14th, that he was out of danger. I had counted on this prompt recovery, knowing how much a mother has a tendency to be unduly alarmed.

Your affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[1]

At *Witepsk, July 29, 1812.*

MY DAUGHTER:

I thank you for the letter you wrote me for my birthday. I was delighted to hear that Napoleon is entirely convalescent. I hope that by this time he has completely recovered.

You know my sentiments toward you. Never doubt my affection and the concern I have for your children.

Your very affectionate father,

NAPOLEON.[2]

Smolensk, August 20, 1812.

The Queen in her memoirs has described at length her troubles during the disasters of 1814. Having left Paris on March 29 and stopped at Glatigny, Trianon, Rambouillet, Louye, she rejoined Josephine at Navarre on April 1. On April 15 she returned to Rambouillet, where the Empress Marie Louise received her, but did not urge her to stay. On April 16 the Queen was again at Malmaison. It was there she received this letter:

MY SISTER:

I received a letter from you dated April 9. I have received a second from Rambouillet the 16th. I thank you for the visit you paid the Empress and for the sentiments you express toward me. Let me

[1] Original signed.
[2] Original signed.

know what becomes of you. Write me occasionally and believe in my constant regard for you.

Your affectionate brother,

NAPOLEON.

Fontainebleau, April 17, 1814.

P.S. Please give many messages from me to the Empress Josephine.[1]

We know that at the time of Josephine's death, neither Hortense nor Eugène wrote the Emperor to break the news to him. The Queen excuses herself for this in her memoirs and declares this act of neglect was due to the impossibility of reaching the august exile by letter. Be that as it may, the silence on the part of his stepchildren, which they continued throughout his stay at Elba, wounded Napoleon and formed one of his principal grievances against her. This dissatisfaction was apparent, when he received her on the evening of his triumphal reentry into Paris, March 20, 1815, with a noticeable lack of cordiality.

Only two letters bearing on the relations of Hortense and Napoleon in the last few months of his reign still exist. The first is not dated, but the title by which Hortense is referred to indicates that it was written during the month of April, 1815.[2] Hortense tells in her memoirs how she insisted verbally and by letter on having the legal situation between her and her husband definitely settled. Napoleon replied as follows to her letter:

To Madame la Princesse Hortense.

MY SISTER:

I reply herewith to your letter of April 11 in regard to your separation from your husband. This

[1] Original signed.

[2] After the return of the Emperor from Elba the members of his family who had occupied foreign thrones resumed their princely titles, and were no longer referred to as King or Queen. (Translator's note.)

appears to be in accordance with his wishes, but I cannot make any decision without having heard from him. This is an indispensable formality and one which I insist on.

Your affectionate brother,

NAPOLEON.[1]

Louis, as we know, did not return to France during the Hundred Days. Consequently Napoleon could not consult him, but, moved by the prayers of Hortense, the Emperor finally yielded to her entreaties, and before setting out for the campaign of Waterloo handed over to the Queen of Holland this note, the last he was ever to write her:

To the Princess Hortense.

MY SISTER:

According to the decision of the family council of [date left blank] I authorize you to live apart from your husband.

Your affectionate brother,

NAPOLEON.[2]

Paris, June 10, 1815.

Then followed Malmaison, the "Bellerophon," Saint Helena and finally Napoleon's death, May 5, 1821. It appears that Hortense wrote the Emperor only once during these six years.

In 1821, when the faithful Planat was about to leave for the desert island, she gave him a letter for Napoleon dated Arenenberg, June 18, 1821. In it she inquired if he had received a box with a portrait of Josephine on the cover which she had sent him two years before. She added, speaking of her mother: "If she were still alive

[1] Original signed and not dated.

[2] Original signed. The archives of Prince Napoleon contain a letter identical with the above, except the word "husband" is replaced by "wife" and "sister" by "brother," and addressed to King Louis.

her sole regret would have been to have shared only your Majesty's happiness."

When Hortense was writing these words, the body of the Emperor was already lying at rest in the Valley of the Geraniums at Saint Helena.

NOTES TO VOLUME II

Chapter X

1. The Queen traveling under the name of Madame Durougsky was at Lausanne July 26. The following day she arrived at Sècheron, a hamlet in the parish of Petit Sacconex about one kilometer north of Geneva.

2. Hortense had rejoined her mother at Geneva September 21.

3. *Sénatus-consulte* of December 13, 1810. As a matter of fact, Louis received an income of 500,000 francs annually from the forests of Montmorency, Chantilly, Ermenonville, l'Isle-Adam, Coye, Pontarmé and Lys; 500,000 francs from the estates situated in the Bouches-du-Rhin, and a million from the general funds of the Treasury.

4. By a decision taken at the palace of Saint Cloud, July 20, 1810, the Emperor granted the Queen the use of the palace of the rue Cerutti, and the château of Saint-Leu, plus 1,750,000 francs income. Of this sum 1,000,000 was to keep up her household, 500,000 for that of the Grand-Duc de Berg and 250,000 for that of Prince Charles Louis Napoleon. By another decree given at the Tuileries, December 26, 1810, the Emperor granted Hortense 500,000 francs to be taken from the 2,000,000 allowed Louis by the *sénatus-consulte* of December 13, 1810. But Louis having, in a letter of December 30, refused this grant, the Emperor by a new decree, April 24, 1811, turned over the use of the entire amount to Hortense "till King Louis returns to France."

5. Louis had declined to pay for the purchase of carriages and other expenses incurred at the time of the celebration in honor of Napoleon's wedding. Hortense paid them.

6. I was the first person in France who had a round table in her drawing-room, on which people could work or play games as they do in the country. Formerly, French hostesses always placed themselves next to the fireplace with the other ladies forming a circle around them, and the gentlemen standing up in the center. Conversation in which each of the guests sought to display his wit, was the only form of entertainment at an evening party. (Note of Queen Hortense.)

7. Madame du Cayla.

8. Contrary to what the Queen says, it was a month after the Battle of Friedland that the Emperor wrote his letter to Lacépède, and his

Note on the education of the young girls brought up at Ecouen, from the point of view of religion, arithmetic, writing, spelling, etc. The organization of the schools at Saint Denis and Ecouen, which were each to have six hundred pupils, was established in the imperial decree of March 29, 1809.

9. The order of arch-chancellor of November 8, 1810, specified that there were to be prayers said for the Emperor, the Empress, Queen Hortense, and *collectively* for the members of the imperial family and all the members of the Legion of Honor.

10. "I shall always regret that mere vulgar fatigue should have prevented me from enjoying every instant of that memorable [*verhangnissvoll* in the original] night. The sight was a curious one in every respect. Women trying to be coquettish, men asleep, ministers without anything to do, the Emperor deeply moved, all jumbled up together around tables where wine, chocolate, etc., were served. At six o'clock, we were informed that the labor pains had quieted down, we could go home. The desire for sleep had so completely conquered all these noble emotions I have already described, that everyone went to bed and did not wake till the cannon went off." (Unpublished letter from Saint-Aulaire to d'Estourmel, undated.)

11. The King of Rome was born March 20, 1811, at 9 A. M. according to the *Moniteur*. Other authorities agree with Hortense in specifying 8 A. M.

12. While awaiting the restoration of Saint Denis, the body of my son had been provisionally placed in Notre Dame. (Note of Queen Hortense.)

13. The first time they met after the Emperor's return from Elba, Napoleon said to Talma in the informal manner which he usually employed: "Chateaubriand declares that you are giving me lessons in how to play the Emperor. I consider this a compliment, because at any rate it shows that I act the part fairly well." (J. Hobhouse, *Lettres écrites de Paris pendant le dernier règne de Napoléon*. Ghent, Houdin, 1817, Vol. I, page 42.)

14. I often heard the Emperor repeat this remark. One day for instance, he said to me: "What should a monarch most desire?" "To be loved," I answered quickly. "You know nothing about it, my daughter," he said, pinching my ear. "If a ruler does good, people will know it after his death and then they will praise him, but in order to be obeyed while he is alive he must seem cruel in order to be feared." (Note of Queen Hortense.)

15. The costume ball took place February 6, the masked ball February 11, 1812.

16. Caroline represented France, Pauline, Rome.
17. The Russian ambassador.
18. Later the Queen mentions his name. It was de Brack.

Chapter XI

1. One Sunday, when we were dining at the Tuileries, the Emperor said to me: "Read this little story I have just received." I looked at the paper he handed me and I recognized the handwriting of Madame de Genlis. While the others gathered in a circle around me to hear what I was about to read, I glanced over the paper, and saw that instead of a story, it was an account of the impression which a law the government had just passed, had produced. Nevertheless, I began to read, but the Emperor snatched up the sheets of paper he had given me and exclaimed: "Ah, I have made a mistake." He hurried off to his study, from which he returned with another sheet of paper in the same handwriting which had on it a little tale which I read aloud. (Note of Queen Hortense.)—"He [Napoleon] had given orders to a number of persons to inform him of what went on among the scientists, the business men and the officers. . . . Madame de Genlis, Fievée, Regnaud de Saint-Jean d'Angély were among his correspondents and were paid for it." (Comte Chaptal, *Mes souvenirs sur Napoléon,* Paris, Plon, 1893, octavo, page 381.)

2. The Duc d'Abrantès was given the command of the 4th Army Corps because my brother was to stay in Paris. This army corps included all the army of Italy, which the Viceroy had organized with the greatest care, and which was as well drilled as any of the French troops. My brother received a letter about them which annoyed him extremely. It appears that Junot [Duc d'Abrantès] had met them near Dresden while they were marching, and had assumed command before they arrived at their destination. He had made them maneuver in spite of the rain and their fatigue, probably in order to judge their skill. But my brother, who loved his troops as though they were his children, said to me: "Did Junot think that he was handling a lot of drafted men? He will see what my troops can do in battle. But why should he tire them out for nothing?" Eugène shortly after rejoined his corps and took over the command. (Note of Queen Hortense.)

3. The Emperor left Saint Cloud with Marie Louise, May 9. They arrived at Dresden, May 16. Napoleon left there again May 29 to join the army.

4. This fever broke out July 7, and the child's life was in danger for several days.

5. Josephine, who had left on July 16, arrived at Milan on the 28th. There her daughter-in-law Princess Augusta gave birth to a child who was later to be the Empress of Brazil.

6. October 24, 1812.

7. The Queen here is confusing two things. The unofficial account to which she refers appears in the *Journal de l'Empire,* November 19, 1812. It was the preceding day, and not, as she says, the following day, that the same paper had published the 27th Bulletin of the Grand Army which speaks of the fine conduct of Eugène and his troops.

8. This refers to the maneuver executed by Eugène before Orscha on November 20, 1812.

9. It was then that the Queen published her first collection of *Romances mises en musique par S. M. L. R. H.* (Ballads set to music by Her Majesty Queen Hortense).

10. March 7-22, 1813. Hortense formed part of the small escort.

11. It has frequently been said that the Emperor's marriage with an Austrian archduchess gave him a feeling of too great security in regard to that country and that it was this confidence in Austria's attitude that brought about his defeat. What really happened was exactly the opposite. It was his mistrust of that country's motives that caused him to hesitate to conclude the peace of Dresden which would have been useful to him. I believe that the Emperor of Austria and his cabinet were favorably disposed; but the Austrian aristocracy, which was always hostile to the Empire, did not seek to conceal its joy at our misfortunes and its hopes of speedily being able to overthrow the power of France, which it had never ceased to resent since the Revolution. Monsieur de Narbonne, our minister at Vienna, through his family connections and elegant manners was easily able to discover the intentions of a clique which, in spite of the official position he occupied, considered that he was one of them. He informed the Emperor of the hostile plans that were being set on foot. The Emperor therefore very properly hesitated to accept the preliminary conditions of a peace which would deprive him of all the fortresses still in his possession. Believing that Austria was treacherous he hesitated to turn the forts over to her. Peace was so necessary that he was wrong to act as he did, since things turned out badly, but this was due to his distrust. His critics consequently are wrong in saying that he allowed himself to become careless on account of an imaginary safety or was led astray by an ambitious dream which could never come true. To form a proper estimate of such a genius, and to be in a position to declare that he made such or such mistakes, one should know all the circumstances of the case. But it is easy enough to say, while admitting the unquestionable greatness of the man one is discussing, "I should have done much better than he did—

consequently I am greater than he is." This is a human weakness which is all too frequent nowadays. (Note by Queen Hortense.)—This note in the Queen's handwriting is pinned to one of the pages of the green manuscript.

12. The Queen here was misled either by Monsieur de Flahaut or by her sisterly affection. As a matter of fact the Emperor just then was much displeased with Eugène.

13. The Emperor left Paris April 15, 1813. The oath was taken March 30 at the Elysée.

14. Monsieur de Turenne gave *dix sols* [fifty centimes or, prior to 1914, ten cents] to the footman for bringing back a glove which the Emperor had left in his carriage. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

15. The Emperor left Paris January 25, 1814. The presentation of the King of Rome to the officers of the National Guard took place Sunday, January 23, in the Tuileries, before mass. The same day Napoleon signed the letters patent conferring the Regency on the Empress.

16. The King of Bavaria on behalf of the allies had offered the province of Milan, and even the whole of Italy, to Eugène November 22, 1813. The proposition was repeated January 17, 1814.

17. Battle of the Mincio, February 8, 1814. A little later General Grenier drove the Neapolitans from Parma.

18. The Empress and the King of Rome left the Tuileries for Rambouillet, March 29, at 11 A. M.

19. Hortense left Paris March 29 at 9 P. M. In the first carriage were the Queen and her two children, in another, Madame de Mailly, Monsieur and Madame d'Arjuzon, in a third, Mademoiselle Cochelet and a maid.

20. Now Plaine d'Aubervilliers. Translator.

21. The most direct route between Rambouillet and Evreux was through the forest of Rambouillet by way of Houdan and Dreux.

22. Highway from Paris to Chartres by way of Rambouillet and Maintenon.

23. A posting-house between Paris and Fontainebleau.

24. April 1.

25. This may be an allusion to the discreditable behavior of Madame de Rémusat on this occasion.

26. In spite of what the Queen says, it does not seem as though Talleyrand had been present at the meeting held by the Duc de Raguse at his residence in the rue de Paradis where the Duc arranged for his betrayal of the imperial cause. Talleyrand meanwhile was busy on his own account.

27. The future King of the Belgians, Leopold I, grandfather of her Imperial and Royal Highness Princess Napoleon.

28. This double departure took place April 14, 1814, in the morning.

29. Monsieur de Bausset, a thoroughly honest man, deeply attached to our dynasty, relates naïvely in his memoirs how courageously he attempted to help the Empress carry out her wish to be taken prisoner. He considers it criminal on the part of the Emperor's brothers to have vigorously insisted on carrying out the orders they had received. (Note by Hortense.)

30. The visit of Francis I of Austria took place April 16.

Chapter XII

1. Treaty of April 11, 1814, signed on behalf of the Allies by the Emperors of Russia and Austria, the King of Prussia, the Regent of England and the members of the French Provisional Government.

2. Annually (article 7).

3. Monsieur de Talleyrand, too clever to take on himself the blame for such a step, had encouraged the arrival of the Comte d'Artois, and it was the latter who had the courage to sign a paper by which he surrendered to the enemy with a stroke of his pen *fifty-two* fortresses, as well as all our fleet and an immense quantity of war material, the fruit of the conquests and blood of France. (Note of Queen Hortense.) An allusion to the agreement of April 23.

4. Prina, minister of finances, had been assassinated and his body dragged through the streets by the anti-French party in Milan, which city consequently fell into the hands of the Austrians without a blow being struck. (Note of Queen Hortense.)

5. An allusion to the attempted suicide of Napoleon in the night of April 11-12, 1814.

6. Brother of Louis XVIII.

7. A report had been spread intentionally that my brother had had himself announced as the Marquis de Beauharnais. This is entirely untrue. In the first place one is not announced when calling on the King and the General Gifflingue, my brother's aide-de-camp, who was on duty that day, told me that he had asked for this interview on behalf of Prince Eugène and that he did not even know that my brother was entitled to call himself Marquis de Beauharnais. But it is easy to see that the newspapers are animated by a desire to wipe out everything that has taken place in the preceding nineteen years. (Note by Queen Hortense.) This note only appears on the green manuscript. The

visit to the Tuileries referred to took place immediately after Eugène's arrival May 9 at 3 P. M.

8. The future King Louis Philippe.

9. April 20, 1814, Louis had written Hortense a letter in which he informs her that he intends to bring suit for a "legal, complete, and perfect separation."

10. This lunch took place May 14. On the same day a mass was said for the soul of Louis XVI at Notre Dame.

11. The proposed letters patent referred to the Queen as "Mademoiselle de Beauharnais."

12. Napoleon had difficulty in forgiving the Queen for having accepted this title. On his return from Elba he said in connection with the Queen of Holland, whom Louis XVIII made Duchesse de Saint-Leu, "When one has accepted a family's successes, one should be willing to share their misfortunes." (Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre-tombe,* edition published by Biré, Vol. IV, page 11.)

13. The Marquis de Rivière and Comte Armand de Polignac, who had been compromised in the conspiracy of Cadoudal to assassinate the Emperor, had been condemned to death. Josephine's intervention on their behalf had resulted in a reprieve, Rivière being confined in the Fort of Joux and Polignac confined in a nursing home.

14. This refers to the Emperor's two younger brothers: Nicolas Pavlowitch, later Nicolas I, and Michael.

15. Constantin Pavlowitch, elder brother of the two princes mentioned in previous note. He was heir to the throne as successor of Alexander but renounced his right in 1822 in favor of his brother Nicolas.

16. This copy also met with adventures. The Emperor Alexander forgot it the day he was leaving and it remained under a sofa cushion at the Elysée. No one noticed it there, when the palace was occupied in 1814 by the Duc de Berry, and by the Emperor, during the Hundred Days. At the time of the second entrance of the Allies into Paris, Emperor Alexander, who had vainly searched for it everywhere, found it again under the same cushion where he had left it a year before. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

17. This dinner took place May 23.

18. The Queen had the body interred in the chapel of the château. On the night of August 19, 1819, the Prince of Condé had it, together with the body of Charles Bonaparte, taken to a vault in the church of Saint-Leu. The coffin of King Louis was placed in the same spot, on September 29, 1847, a year after his death, as well as that of his son Napoleon Louis, who died at Forli. All four now rest in the crypt of the church under the monument which Napoleon III erected in memory of his father.

19. Josephine had taken cold May 14, during the day she spent with Alexander, at Saint-Leu.

20. Josephine received the sacraments of the Church from Abbé Bertrand at eleven o'clock, and died at noon.

21. Eugène and Hortense left at two o'clock for Saint-Leu.

22. These are the phrases in which the police report, daily presented to the King, announced to Louis XVIII the death of Josephine: "The death of Madame de Beauharnais excites widespread sympathy. This woman was always gentle, well-bred and attractive in manner and mind. Extremely unhappy during her husband's reign, she sought refuge from his brutalities and his contemptuous treatment of her in the study of botany. The public was aware of the manner in which she struggled to rescue the victims of Bonaparte's wrath and was grateful to her for having embraced his knees to implore the reprieve of the Duc d'Enghien." (*Archives nationales, A. B. XIX, 341, bulletin of May 31, sheet 32.*)

23. In order to conform to a condition expressly stipulated in the power of attorney signed by her husband, Hortense only accepted her mother's property with the understanding that she should not be liable for any debts that might exceed the value of what she inherited. The act of settlement of the estate was passed June 22, 1815, by Maître André Claude Noël, notary in Paris. It fixed the total amount of assets at the sum of 7,544,105 Frs., 35 centimes. The amount turned over to Eugène, 3,550,643 Frs., 50 centimes; that received by Hortense, 2,331,987 Frs., 37 centimes. The sum of 1,661,474 Frs., 48 centimes was reserved to be used for the payment of outstanding debts.

Hortense's share included 1,335,702 Frs., 74 household property. It was divided as follows: Furniture of Malmaison to the amount of 2,342 Frs.; musical instruments, 3,450 Frs.; food supplies at Navarre, 5,174 Frs., 50; furniture at Prégny, 4,000 Frs.; part of the picture gallery of Malmaison, 123,522 Frs., 75; art objects, 22,279 Frs., 50; pearls, diamonds and precious stones, 955,784 Frs., 50; silverware, 51,698 Frs.; religious vases in chapel, 2,136 Frs.; enamels, 3,800 Frs., 50; half of the wardrobe, 86,406 Frs., 25; half of toilet articles, 9,797 Frs.; bed and household linen, 13,766 Frs., 50; crystal and glassware, 1,274 Frs., 25; wines and liqueurs, 13,615 Frs., 25; kitchen utensils, 1,540 Frs.; half the horses, 6,250 Frs.; half the carriages, 11,375 Frs.; half harness, 2,292 Frs.; half the birds and animals in the menagerie, 706 Frs., 50; half the herd of merino sheep, 5,402 Frs., 50; half the herd of horned cattle at Malmaison, 2,950 Frs.; half the collections of minerals, 2,935 Frs., 50; half the objects of natural history, 3,202 Frs. Hortense's share was completed by the estate of Chaussée and its dependencies, estimated at 519,610 Frs.; the estate of Prégny, 130,000

Frs.; a part of the sums due to the Empress from her marriage settlement, which fell due at her death, 346,674 Frs., 63.

We may note that, in her memoirs, the Queen does not mention either Chaussée or Prégny, but as she was writing in 1820 it was perhaps dangerous for her to speak of property still belonging to her in France, and she had already sold Prégny.

A further division of several items which had not been divided in the foregoing statement, took place May 15, 1816. Hortense received 331,500 Frs., consisting of 323,246 Frs. in 5% consolidated government bonds and 8,254 Frs. in cash which Eugène owed her.

Chapter XIII

1. Eugène left for Munich June 24, 1814.

2. The Queen, accompanied by Mademoiselle Cochelet, left Saint-Leu on the evening of July 25, 1814.

3. People wished to look at my sketch-book, hear me sing and, if I had not been in mourning, I believe they would have asked me to show them my dancing. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

4. The Queen and Mademoiselle Cochelet left Le Havre September 18, and arrived at Saint-Leu on the 19th at 9 A. M.

5. This visit to the Tuileries took place Sunday, October 2, before mass.

6. Elizabeth Hervey, widow of Mr. Foster, was the second wife of the Duke of Devonshire. She was born in 1759 and died in Rome, March 29, 1824.

7. On the red manuscript the Queen wrote in her own hand another version of her reply which she afterwards scratched out. This read as follows: "For although I had never made this remark and though in the past I had shown how much I disliked elevation in rank, to admit it at present, would not have been worthy of the Emperor, to have denied would not have been polite toward the King. I therefore replied only by a smile."

8. The Queen had once more settled in her house in the rue Cerutti on November 16, 1814.

9. The *Journal de Paris* on January 23, 1815, published an article to which the Queen did not wish to reply. This same paper published on January 29th another article entitled *"Histoire d'un grand procès entre un roi et une reine pour un petit duc."* (The story of a famous lawsuit between a King and a Queen for a little Duke). The article was signed A. Martainville.

10. The speeches of the lawyers had taken up the sessions of

January 7, 19, 27, February 3 and 10, 1815. After two postponements, the King's attorney, Monsieur Courtin, summed up his conclusions, which were favorable to the Queen, on February 24. The case was decided March 8.

11. Mr. Bruce also helped later save Lavallette. (Note by Queen Hortense.) Michael Bruce was born in London. In 1815, he was twenty-five years of age, and had traveled in Syria with Lady Stanhope. As a result of his participation in the escape of Lavallette, he was condemned to three months' imprisonment on April 27, 1816.

12. The person referred to is not Emma Lyon, the mistress of Nelson, who at that time was dying of want at Calais. The "Dame" Hamilton, of whom Hortense speaks, was probably Lady Mary Hamilton, daughter of Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven. Her first husband was Doctor James Walker. She married again, this time Robert Hamilton of Jamaica. Born in Edinburgh in 1739; died at Amsterdam in 1816. A writer of novels, she had two daughters by her first husband, one of whom married Jouy, member of the French Academy, and the other, Elizabeth, who married General Baron Thiébaut.

13. Involved in the attempted assassination of Napoleon.

14. Strictly speaking there were no bodies of troops, during the First Restoration, into which entry was strictly limited to former exiles. But in certain companies, for example, the *compagnies rouges,* all the members with a very few exceptions were members of the nobility.

15. At Rambouillet, Marie Louise handed over to Monsieur Peyrusse, from the funds of the privy purse which she had collected, the sum of 911,000 Frs.—and not 700,000 Frs., as the Queen says—to be given to the Emperor.

16. The Duc de Broglie, who knew Wellington about this time, has left the following portrait of him: "The foundation of his character was essentially English, English of the old stock, with a mind that was simple, direct, solid and cautious, but rigid, hard and rather narrow." (*Souvenirs du feu duc de Broglie,* Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1886, octavo, Vol. I, page 273.)

17. According to Mademoiselle Cochelet the diamonds were put in two boxes, one of which was given to Boutiaguine, the other to Girardin.

18. The verdict, delivered on March 8, 1815, by the 6th Chamber of the Tribunal Civil de la Seine, was based on Article 373 of the Civil Code, and condemned Hortense to deliver her older son to Louis, within three months.

Chapter XIV

1. Charles, Lord Kinnaird, the famous art collector, was born April 8, 1780. He died December 11, 1826. In May 1806, he married Lady Olivia Fitzgerald. The Queen is mistaken in the date. March 5, 1815, was a Sunday, not a Monday. The news of Napoleon's landing, which took place March 1, reached Paris by official telegraph March 5.

2. Fouché's house was in the rue d'Artois (formerly rue Cerutti). It was next that of the Queen, but whereas her gardens extended as far as the rue Taitbout, those of Fouché did not do so. His residence since 1848 has belonged to the Rothschild family and today is No. 19, rue d'Artois.

3. This mutiny had been prepared by Fouché, in July 1814. He proposed to replace Louis XVIII by the Duc d'Orléans, but it was not till 1815 that he involved Generals Lallemand and Lefebvre-Desnoëttes in the conspiracy.

4. Lavallette took refuge in the Queen's house on March 14. His room was in a part of the house facing the street and reserved for the servants.

5. This meeting did not take place on the date given by the Queen but at 10 P. M. on March 15, the day before the attempt to arrest Fouché.

6. Louis XVIII left the Tuileries a little before midnight, March 19.

7. I revenged myself for this injustice in being of service to her mother and sister. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

8. Carlotta Gazzani had been reader to Josephine after the latter's coronation as Queen of Italy. She was for a short time the mistress of Napoleon, was one of Josephine's ladies in waiting after the divorce and had her husband appointed *Receveur Général de l'Eure.*

9. Near the Pavillon de Flore, close to the Pont Royal.

10. Fleury de Chaboulon was boasting. Opposite a remark similar to this in De Chaboulon's book, Napoleon wrote the following comment: "More than a hundred officers during the nine months visited the island of Elba from France, from Corsica, from Italy."

11. Admiral Ver Huell had been in command of the squadron in the Texel since April 7, 1813. In 1813, when Holland had risen against the French occupation, he had brought all his ships into the harbor of Nieuwediep, shut himself up in Forts Lasalle and Morland, and refused to capitulate until after the Emperor's abdication.

12. In the course of the day, the Duke accepted definitely the post the Emperor offered him. The decree appointing him to it is dated March 21.

Chapter XV

1. I do not dare mention an action which, if it actually occurred, was really infamous. It was said that one of my letters was opened and a paragraph interpolated which was unkind toward the Emperor of Russia. Did it seem likely that I, who felt the warmest friendship toward him, would forget what I owed him? (Note by Queen Hortense.)

2. By the decrees of Lyons (March 12, 1815) Napoleon had broken up the Swiss regiments, abolished the titles of nobility dating from before the Empire, annulled all appointments to the Legion of Honor made since his abdication, placed the property of the Bourbons under sequester, and banished the members of the aristocracies who, having left France previously, had returned since his fall. On March 13, he abolished the House of Lords. On March 25, after his arrival in Paris, a decree forbade all former officers and persons attached to the King's military or civil household to live within thirty leagues of Paris.

3. This refers to the Dowager Duchess of Orléans, Louise Adélaïde de Bourbon Penthièvre, widow of Philippe Egalité, who having broken her leg was unable to accompany the court to Ghent.

3a. Louise Maris Thérèse Bathilde d'Orléans, sister of Philippe Egalité, was the wife of Louis Henri Joseph, Duc de Bourbon, who in 1830 took the title of Prince de Condé.

4. Joseph arrived in Paris, March 23. Jerome after many difficulties arrived in Paris on May 27.

5. Lucien arrived for the first time at Charenton about April 4, but returned to Switzerland without having seen his brother. Joseph having reconciled him with Napoleon, he returned to Paris where he arrived May 8.

6. April 17, 1815.

7. April 11. This lunch at Malmaison took place on April 12 before Napoleon moved into the Elysée.

8. The second French edition of Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* was put on sale in Paris May, 1814. It consisted of three octavo volumes and was published by Nicole, 12 rue de Seine. Hardly had the first edition been printed, when it was seized and destroyed September 24, 1810. On September 27, Madame de Staël had been invited to leave France within forty-eight hours. She had her book reprinted in London in 1813, and in Leipzig in 1814.

9. Benjamin Constant had brought out in 1814 a pamphlet entitled *De la liberté des brochures, des pemphlets et des journaux considérés*

sous le rapport de l'intérêt du gouvernement, Paris, H. Nicole, 1814, octavo.

10. May 1, 1815.

11. The Queen is mistaken in attributing this bust to Lady Hamilton. It was executed by Madame Seymour-Damer and is now in the Museum of Versailles.

12. June 1.

13. June 7.

Chapter XVI

1. The Emperor left Paris Monday, June 12, at 4 A. M.

2. Macdonald.

3. On the afternoon of June 20 Benjamin Constant read his novel *Adolphe, anecdote trouvée dans les papiers d'un inconnu* to the Queen and some friends. The book was not published till the end of the same year.

4. It was on the afternoon of June 20 that Joseph received a letter written the day before at Philippeville in which Napoleon did not conceal the extent of the disaster. With this letter was enclosed another for the cabinet ministers, which gave fewer details. Joseph read this second letter at a meeting of the cabinet which was held at the Tuileries.

5. The Emperor arrived at the Elysée June 21 at 8 A. M.

6. The Emperor received Joseph and Lucien before attending the cabinet meeting which was held at a little after ten.

7. Jerome had been wounded on June 16 when the French troops were trying to take the wood at Boussu.

8. June 25.

9. The two princes were concealed in the apartment of Madame Tessier, who sold stockings, Boulevard Montmartre.

10. As a matter of fact Beker arrived at Malmaison on the evening of June 25.

11. This scene took place on the morning of June 28. The little boy was Comte Léon, son of Eléonore Denuelle de la Plaigne. Comte Léon had first been cared for by Madame Loir, the nurse of Achille Murat. In 1812 he was admitted to the boarding-school Hix, 6 rue Matignon, accompanied by the children of Baron de Mauvières, his guardian. The Baron was the father-in-law of Méneval, the Emperor's secretary.

12. Madame Walewska. When the Queen speaks of children in the plural she is making a mistake, for along with her son, the future minister of Napoleon III, the Countess would hardly have brought the son

by her marriage with Count Walewski. This visit would seem to have taken place on June 28. We may mention once and for all that the Queen's memory regarding dates in this chapter is not as accurate as it might be.

13. Napoleon, at Saint Helena, gave this diamond collar to his faithful companion Comte Marchand. The Emperor gave Hortense in exchange for the collar a three months' note for 200,000 francs. Later when she presented this note to the Emperor's executors, they declined to pay, stating that the collar was only worth 80,000 francs and agreeing to return it to the Queen after Marchand had received the sum.

14. It is possible that the Queen was mistaken in regard to Flahaut having this special mission. None of the other persons present at Malmaison mention it, and it seems possible she was confusing it with a mission entrusted to Beker and Lavallette.

15. Another eye-witness speaks of the Emperor as being dressed in brown, and a third says he was wearing a maroon-colored suit.

16. As a matter of fact General Charles Lallemand left Paris alone and joined the Emperor at Niort.

17. The Emperor left Malmaison Thursday, June 29, a few minutes before 5 in the afternoon.

Chapter XVII

1. The attempted assassination of Napoleon in the rue Saint Nicaise.

2. Louis XVIII arrived at Saint Denis July 6.

3. Taking the name of a Russian lady, the Queen rented an apartment in the rue Taitbout opposite the door of her garden.

4. I have found out since that the allied sovereigns had been informed that there was a plot to murder them all and that I was mentioned as the head of this conspiracy. (Note of Queen Hortense.)

5. Decazes who was very intimate with M. d'Arjuzon sent word to him that he was about to enforce this order. M. d'Arjuzon declined to communicate it to me and when finally M. Müffling sent for M. de Vaux in order to repeat the order to him I only had an hour left in which to get ready to step into my carriage. For particular instructions had been issued that I was not to be allowed to spend the night in Paris. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

6. The morning of July 17; the instructions were that the Queen was to leave within two hours. De Vaux secured a further delay on condition that the Queen should be out of Paris by nightfall.

7. It was Madame de Pontécoulant who told this to Monsieur de Marmol. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

8. The Queen left the rue Cerutti July 17, at 9 P. M. Her party was in three carriages. She was in the first one with her two children. In the second were Monsieur de Marmol and Monsieur de Woyna, the Austrian officer; in the third, the nurse of the younger boy and a maid.

9. The notice posted up was copied word for word from the notice that Monsieur de Vitrolles had printed in the *Moniteur*. Neither the original author nor those who copied his text took the trouble to find out whether the people they mentioned as being my intimate friends had ever crossed my threshold. (Note by Queen Hortense.)

Chapter XVIII

1. The Queen arrived at Aix early in August. Savoy belonged to France at that time, but it was governed by representatives of both France and Italy. The Préfet of the Department of Mont Blanc still lived at Chambéry, but he had with him a governor-general representing the King of Sardinia.

2. A letter from Monsieur de Flahaut to Madame de Souza, dated Lyons, October, 1815, gives us the key to this mystery. It was published by Lord Kerry (*The First Napoleon,* page 252), "I am very unhappy at the turn things have taken with *ma cousine* [Hortense]. Several old letters came for me to Aix; she had them sent on to her and opened them. Amongst them was a letter from Mademoiselle M. which upset her terribly and threw her into a nervous fever." A note by Lord Kerry informs us that Mademoiselle M. was Mademoiselle Mars (a famous actress).

3. The young prince just then was taken sick with jaundice.

4. An allusion to the famous Swiss victory over Charles the Bold in 1476.

5. The Queen dined at midday December 5 at Aarau. She spent the night at Baden. On the 6th she dined at Zurich and spent the night at Winterthür. Finally on the 7th she dined at Frauenfeld, arriving at Constance (Auberge de l'Aigle) that evening.

Chapter XIX

1. Shot December 7, 1815.

2. Monsieur de Flahaut married Miss Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, daughter of Lord Keith, on June 19, 1817, at Edinburgh. He had shortly before resigned from the French Army. His resignation was accepted, but he reentered the service in 1830. He was made a peer

in France in 1831 and served under the Duc d'Orléans in the Army of the North. In 1841 he became Ambassador to Vienna, retired seven years later. Under the second Empire he was made a senator on December 31. He died in the *Palais de la Chancellerie de la Légion d'Honneur* on September 1, 1870. His private residence in Paris like that of his mother was the handsome house situated on the corner of the Avenue des Champs Elysées and the rue de la Boétie.

3. Stéphanie de Beauharnais.

Chapter XX

1. Hortense arrived at Munich May 11, 1817, and left on the 17th for Augsburg.

2. During the latter half of October, 1818.

3. He had been unjustly condemned and executed for having betrayed France in India.